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& PACIFIC
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NFL PLAYOFFS

Matchups pair quarterbacks who are veterans of the postseason against newcomers

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Volume 76, No. 192 ©SS 2018

FRIDAY, JANUARY 12, 2018

平成29年4月5日 第三種郵便物認可 日刊(土日除く)
発行所 星条旗新聞社 〒100-0032 東京都港区六本木7丁目23番17号 定価 ¥100

\$1.00

Senate Dems want Trump to get tougher on Russians

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

Senate Democrats on Wednesday called for the Trump administration to adopt a set of tougher measures against Russia, although many of their suggestions about improving NATO cyberoperations already have been adopted by the alliance.

The senators charged in a 200-page report that the White House lacks a coherent plan to counter Moscow's efforts at undermining the West.

"Never before has a U.S. president so clearly ignored such a grave and growing threat to U.S. national security," the report said.

The findings, which detail Russian meddling in elections across Europe and the U.S., called for a tougher line, particularly in cyberspace. That would mean closer coordination with NATO, the report says.

Among the recommendations in the report are "rapid-reaction teams" to defend allies that come under attack.

The U.S. also should convene a special meeting of the NATO heads of state to review Russian government-sponsored cyberattacks and to determine when such assaults should trigger the alliance's mutual protection provision, the report said.

SEE SENATE ON PAGE 2

The report by Senate Democrats comes as independent prosecutor Robert Mueller continues his investigation into possible cooperation between the Trump campaign and Moscow during the 2016 presidential election.

Weighty problem

Physically fit Army recruits are hard to find — especially in 11 states

By JIM MICHAELS
USA Today

WASHINGTON — The Army's problem of finding physically fit recruits at a time of rising obesity in the U.S. is especially acute in the South — where it traditionally draws a high percentage of soldiers — a study published Wednesday finds.

Army recruits from Southern states are generally in poorer physical condition than those from other parts of the country, concluded researchers at The Citadel, a military college in Charleston, S.C.

"This has a real impact on national security," said Daniel Born-

stein, a researcher who led the study.

The regional distinction also suggests that government policy can influence fitness, and the South may be falling behind the rest of the country. "Some of the greatest public health achievements have come as the result of state-level policy change," the study found.

SEE WEIGHTY ON PAGE 2



PHOTO BY SCOTT TYNES
Courtesy of the U.S. National Guard

MILITARY

Weighty: Recruits with weight issues more likely to be hurt in basic training

FROM FRONT PAGE

Eleven states — Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and West Virginia — had among the highest rates of recruits who became injured during basic training.

The results reflect trends in the nation where Southern states generally have higher obesity rates. Adult obesity is 35 percent or higher in Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi and West Virginia, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Lack of physical fitness and obesity contribute to a higher injury rate among soldiers in basic training. Each recruit lost to attrition cost the government \$31,000 in 2005, according to the study.

The study examined recruits who entered the Army between 2010 and 2013 and looked at initial physical tests, including timed runs, and injury rates after recruits get to basic training.

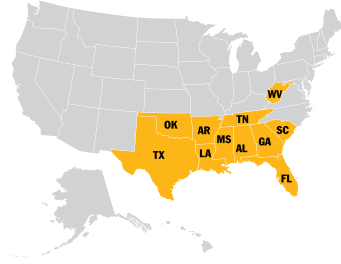
The struggle to find physically fit recruits is not new for the Army. Even during World War II only about 50 percent of young people were qualified to join. Today, the percentage has dropped to 23 percent.

That number also includes those not qualified because of other factors, such as a criminal record or lack of a high school diploma. But physical fitness remains a growing problem for the military.

“What we’re seeing is a less fit population,” said Mark Hertling, a retired three-star general who served on the president’s physical fitness council under President Barack

Training injuries

11 states with highest rate of recruit injuries in Army basic training



SOURCE: The Citadel

NOGA ARM-RAW/Stars and Stripes

Obama.

“Recruiting challenges are going to get tougher for the military,” said Hertling, who made changes to accommodate the declining fitness of recruits when he commanded Army basic training.

Bornstein and Hertling said the Army cannot fix the problem without support from society. The study cited bringing physical education back to schools or improving infrastructure, such as sidewalks, to encourage walking.

“We are not making the changes we need to weave physical activity back into our culture,” Bornstein said.

Senate: Cyberattacks concern US lawmakers

FROM FRONT PAGE

“The United States and our European allies remain woefully vulnerable to cyberattacks, which are a preferred asymmetric weapon of state hybrid threat actors,” it said. “Moreover, the United States and its allies have not defined the contours of cyberattacks in the context of NATO’s Article 5.”

Still, NATO has already begun to move in the direction called for in the Senate report, establishing a cyber “center of excellence” in Estonia and one focused on hybrid threats based in Finland. NATO also has a cyber quick-reaction team, and information-sharing agreements with the European Union have been set up to ensure cyberattacks are countered in real time.

In addition, the alliance has formally agreed that cyberattacks can potentially activate Article 5, triggering a collective alliance military response. It remains unclear, however, what type of cyberattack would rise to such a level that NATO’s collective defense provision should be invoked.

The only time in NATO history that Article 5 was activated was after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

The report by Senate Democrats comes as independent prosecutor Robert Mueller continues his investigation into possible cooperation between the Trump campaign and Moscow during the 2016 presidential election.

In speeches, Trump has denied any cooperation with Moscow while also speaking of his desire for closer ties with Russia. Trump’s past comments about NATO’s irrelevance have raised concern in the region about U.S. commitment to Europe.

Yet U.S. military efforts in Europe have continued even as Trump has talked up his desire for better relations with Russia. The military has moved forward with troop rotations in Eastern Europe, and the Pentagon budget under Trump calls for increased funding for operations aimed at deterring Russian aggression.

In addition, the Trump administration has authorized the sale of lethal aid to Ukraine, a move opposed by the Obama administration because of concerns about antagonizing Moscow.

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German police stop US Army howitzer shipment

Associated Press

BERLIN — Police in Germany halted a shipment of self-propelled howitzers for the U.S. Army after determining they lacked proper documentation and had been loaded on unsuitable trailers.

They said the howitzers were being loaded onto replacement vehicles

Thursday two days after a police patrol stopped the trucks carrying them near the town of Bautzen, not far from the Polish border.

Saxony state police say an examination of the convoy of six M109 howitzers showed the shipment lacked the necessary paperwork and that the load was both too wide and too heavy

for the trailers.

In addition, they say the convoy lacked the necessary accompanying vehicles and that some drivers had been driving for longer than legally permissible.

Police said it’s up to the private transport company to resolve the problem.

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MILITARY

Army mulling WWII-era 'pink and green' uniform

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

The U.S. Army will make a final decision in a matter of months on whether to switch back to its classic World War II-era "pink and green" dress uniform as part of an effort to more closely link troops to the service's history, the Army said.

The uniform would replace the current Army Service Uniform — introduced in 2008 — which would be used as a more formal dress uniform.

The proposed change has the support of Sergeant Major of the

Army Dan Dailey, who donned a prototype at the Army-Navy game in December.

"That (World War II) was a point in history where soldiers were highly respected and there was a sense of nationalism in the country. When you looked at them, you said, 'That is an American soldier,'" Dailey said recently.

The pink and green uniform, considered by many to be the sharpest in Army history, appears to have support among a large number of soldiers. An Army Times survey found more than 70 percent of respondents favored the idea of returning to

that uniform.

Still, some soldiers have voiced reservations about adding yet another dress uniform to their wardrobes.

A switch, however, appears inevitable. The Army has showcased the uniform at prominent events, such as the Association of the U.S. Army convention in October and the Army-Navy football game.

The service said development of the uniform was done in collaboration with the Center for Military History.

"In order to maximize the positive interest in this new uniform,



RON LEE/Courtesy of the U.S. Army

Sergeant Major of the Army Dan Dailey, center, stands Dec. 9 with soldier models wearing the proposed "pink and green" daily service uniform at the Army-Navy football game in Philadelphia.

the Army has planned key engagements to assist with a possible design decision and introduction of the Pink and Green Uniform to the Army workforce," the Army said in a statement Wednesday.

For example, there is a trial with 150 soldiers from the New

England Recruiting Battalion along with a traveling historical exhibit, the Army said.

"Based on soldier feedback the Army will make a decision in 2018," the statement said.

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Pilots back in Lakenheath after Baltic air-policing mission

By WILLIAM HOWARD
Stars and Stripes

RAF LAKENHEATH, England — "Long time no see," Capt. "Nacho" Taylor said to his wife from the cockpit of his fighter jet shortly after landing on base Tuesday afternoon.

It was a simple homecoming for Taylor and three other F-15C Eagle pilots returning to RAF Lakenheath from Siauliai Air Base, Lithuania, after completing their four-month deployment for NATO's Baltic air-policing mission.

More than 140 airmen and seven fighter jets from the 493rd Expeditionary Fighter Squadron carried out 172 training sorties and about 30 intercepts while safeguarding the Baltic airspace. The mission has taken on renewed importance in the wake of Russia's 2014 invasion of Ukraine.

"Everything was calm, cool and collected for all of the intercepts and sorties that I was a part of," Capt. Christopher Mills, a pilot with the 493rd EFS, said.

Mills said that pilots from the unit did about one-month rotations during the deployment and worked closely with their maintenance counterparts to ensure that four F-15C Eagles equipped with live ammunition were always ready.

"The adrenaline rush comes when the alert siren goes off," Mills said. "From there, you run and get into your gear as fast as you can, jump into a van and drive to the hangars, climb up the ladder into your jet, and as soon as my foot hit the seat I'm starting up the jet."

During the deployment, the airmen also trained and familiarized themselves with NATO forces from Belgium and Estonia.

"We got to see their jets and get a perspective on their operations," said Master Sgt. Rey Oliveras, maintenance project officer for the 493rd EFS.

"Working with NATO is very easy, and the support we received from the host nation was amazing," Oliveras said. "Our airmen were able to interact not only with the military but also the local community."

The Royal Danish Air Force took over lead of the mission from the U.S. Air Force during a handover ceremony at the Lithuanian air base Monday. The remaining airmen from RAF Lakenheath are slated to return home later this week.

The Danish F-16 detachment will continue the mission for the first four months of 2018 in their sixth deployment.

"A strong and defensive alliance, NATO remains committed to the defense of allies and will continue to perform the peacetime mission of air-policing through Allied Air Command and the Combined Air Operations Centre, across the alliance and specifically in the Baltic region," Maj. Gen. Thierry Dupont, commander of NATO's Combined Air Operations Centre at Uedem, Germany, said during Monday's ceremony.

A total of 45 allied air force detachments and more than 3,000 personnel have deployed near the Russian border in support of the mission over the past 14 years.



WILLIAM HOWARD/Stars and Stripes

Family members wait Tuesday for Capt. "Nacho" Taylor to get out of an F-15C Eagle shortly after returning to RAF Lakenheath, England, from a NATO Baltic air-policing rotation.

MILITARY



PHOTOS BY MARCUS FICHTL/Stars and Stripes

A portrait of Staff Sgt. Kyle LeFlore overlooks his former comrades during a memorial ceremony Thursday at Camp Humphreys, South Korea. LeFlore was killed Saturday while visiting family in Nebraska.

Camp Humphreys service held for soldier killed while on home leave

By MARCUS FICHTL
Stars and Stripes

CAMP HUMPHREYS, South Korea — A soldier who was killed while visiting family in Nebraska was remembered by his comrades in arms as a born champion during a memorial Thursday at a chapel on his former base.

Staff Sgt. Kyle LeFlore, who had survived tours in Iraq and Afghanistan, was fatally shot while on leave in his hometown of Omaha before heading to a new post as a recruiter in Arizona. He is survived by his wife, Tasha, and 5-year-old son, Kyle Jr.

LeFlore's name rang out three times unanswered during a ceremonial "last roll call" during the memorial at the Freedom Chapel on Camp Humphreys. A volley of gunfire and taps finally punctured the silence.

"Sgt. LeFlore was not weak; he was strong," said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Daniel Robinson, who served with LeFlore at the 602nd Aviation Support Battalion's communication shop at the base south of Seoul.

LeFlore, who joined the Army in 2008, served in South Korea for a year before leaving for the United States in December. He was an avid fan of combat sports who founded the 25th Infantry Division's combative program in Hawaii and boxed for the All-Army Team in Fort Riley, Kan.

He became the 8th Army combat-champion while serving in South Korea. After watching a few taekwondo videos, he also



Soldiers grieve during the memorial service.

won a tournament in the peninsula's premier martial art.

LeFlore's intensity also bled into some lighter moments with his fellow soldiers.

"Every morning he would come into the office and kick the door in and clear the room with a pretend rifle or pistol," said Sgt. Ryan McChesney. "Then I got the idea to booby-trap the door."

That only temporarily stopped LeFlore. McChesney laughed, saying the commo-shop door kicker responded by saying "I must get stronger; I must get better, bigger, faster," then figured out how to avoid the booby traps during his dramatic entrances.

"I've never met anybody with so much confidence — sometimes unrealistic confidence

— but he really believed he could do anything he put his mind to," McChesney said.

Robinson said LeFlore did not keep his strength to himself, and his desk became a revolving door of junior soldiers asking how they could become "champions."

"He had the will, and was willing to help anyone else who wanted to achieve," Robinson said.

LeFlore was shot on Saturday, just days before he was to leave for Arizona, the Omaha World-Herald reported. The newspaper quoted his father, Kay LeFlore, as saying he believes his son was the victim of a robbery.

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Army announces deployments of 4 US-based units

By COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Army on Wednesday announced deployments this spring and summer for four U.S.-based units, calling them regular "troop rotations."

This spring, soldiers from Fort Drum, N.Y., will travel to Iraq, soldiers from Fort Campbell, Ky., will deploy to Afghanistan and soldiers from Fort Stewart, Ga., will be sent to South Korea, the Army announced. Soldiers from Fort Hood in Texas will deploy in the summer to Europe.

The announcements did not identify how many soldiers from the Army posts would deploy, following recent Pentagon guidance not to disclose such information because of security concerns, officials said.

Fort Drum's 10th Mountain Division Headquarters will replace the Army's 1st Armored Division Headquarters in Iraq, taking over the role of Combined Joint Forces Land Component Command for Operation Inherent Resolve, according to the Army. In that role, 10th Mountain Headquarters, led by division commander Maj. Gen. Walter E. Piatt, will oversee the ongoing training and advising of Iraq's security forces, a mission that has continued following Islamic State's loss of all the land that the terrorist group once controlled in Iraq.

In Afghanistan, Fort Campbell's 101st Airborne Division Headquarters will replace the 3rd Infantry Division's Headquarters, which has served as the U.S. Forces-Afghanistan National Support Element since July, according to the Army. In that role, the 101st Headquarters, led by division commander Maj. Gen. Andrew Poppas, will oversee logistics and sustainment operations throughout the country. It will mark the 101st Airborne Division Headquarters' fourth deployment to Afghanistan in the last decade.

The Fort Stewart-based 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division will deploy to South Korea to replace the 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, according to the Army. It will make the first time a 3rd Infantry Division unit has returned to the Korean Pen-

insula since 1953, when fighting in the Korean War ended. The division participated in major battles of that war, including the Battle of Chosin Reservoir.

Since 2015, the Army has rotated combat brigades to South Korea on temporary assignments to train side-by-side with that nation's forces in an effort to guard against North Korean aggression. The 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division has served that role since June.

Fort Hood's 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division will deploy to Europe in the summer in support of Operation Atlantic Resolve, the U.S. mission to train with and support NATO allies and deter Russian aggression in the region following its intervention in Ukraine.

The brigade will replace 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, which arrived in Europe in September with nearly 4,000 troops and has participated in training operations in nations across the continent.

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Widow: Fort Stewart GI died of head wound from live-fire training

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Sgt. Michael T. Trask died from injuries he suffered last month after a bullet grazed his head during a live-fire training

exercise at Fort Stewart in coastal Georgia, his widow told The Atlanta Journal-Constitution.

Angelina Trask of Richmond Hill said her 31-year-old husband — who served in Iraq and

Afghanistan — suffered severe brain damage from the Dec. 6 incident.

The military told her it was an accident, though it is still investigating and has not yet fully

explained to her what happened, she said.

Trask is at least the second soldier to be killed during live-fire training exercises at Fort Stewart since 2015.

WAR/MILITARY

Civil rights leader King honored at Vilseck ceremony

BY MARTIN EGNASH
Stars and Stripes

VILSECK, Germany — Soldiers and schoolchildren at U.S. Army Garrison Bavaria remembered Martin Luther King Jr. on Thursday in a ceremony marking the civil rights leader's birthday.

Monday is the 89th anniversary of King's birth. "We are celebrating (King's) legacy and hard work, not just for African-Americans, but for all Americans," said garrison equal opportunity leader Sgt. 1st Class Rashaad Liban. "It is important for soldiers to remember Martin Luther King's message. And to think about what America has gone through, and what America is going through



MARTIN EGNASH/Stars and Stripes

Children from Vilseck Elementary School in Germany recite poems inspired by Martin Luther King Jr. at a ceremony Thursday honoring the late civil rights leader.

right now."

At the observance, children from Vilseck Elementary School read poems inspired by King, local leaders recited some of his famous speeches and advisers such as Liban gave lessons on the history of the civil rights movement.

Soldiers were reminded to treat it as a

"day on, not a day off" and are encouraged to volunteer in their communities.

"The idea is to be active, and help one another out and bring their people together," Liban said.

King was assassinated in 1968 in Memphis, Tenn.

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Russia: Village held by rebels was source of drones in attack

The Washington Post

BEIRUT — Russia on Wednesday identified the village from which a swarm of drones attacked its main military base in Syria and released photographs of the crudely constructed aircraft that were used.

The revelations only somewhat cleared up the mystery surrounding what amounts to the biggest concerted attack on Russia's main military base of Hemeimeem since the Russian military intervention in Syria began in 2015.

Russia said it held Turkey accountable for the drone attack, calling it a breach of their cease-fire agreement in northern Syria, while Turkey accused Russia and Iran of jeopardizing the entire peace process by launching an offensive to take control of an opposition-held air base in the area.

The Russian Defense Ministry named the opposition-controlled village of Muwazarra, in southern Idlib province, as the location from which a swarm of at least a dozen drones armed with crude explosives was launched Saturday, attacking the Hemeimeem air base and the nearby naval base of Tartous in northwestern Syria. Under the cease-fire deal, Turkey is supposed to restrain opposition forces in Idlib province.

US: American soldier wounded in Afghanistan attack

Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — The U.S. military says one of its soldiers was wounded when insurgents launched an attack in eastern Afghanistan's remote Achin district of Nangarhar province.

Capt. Tom Gresback, a U.S. military spokesman in Afghanistan, told The Asso-

ciated Press one U.S. servicemember was wounded and in stable condition in what he would describe only as "active ground engagement."

He refused to give further details, including whether it involved a local militia.

In Afghanistan, local militias often are paid by the U.S. and are partnered with them in operations in remote regions.

The Taliban claimed the attack Thursday was carried out by two insurgents disguised as local militiamen. Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid told the AP the attackers had infiltrated the local force months earlier.

Gresback said the military is investigating the incident.



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VETERANS

After Baltimore effort, VA to study acupuncture therapy

By MEREDITH COHN
The Baltimore Sun

Seeking ways to curb the use of opioid painkillers, doctors at Baltimore's VA Medical Center started offering a version of acupuncture to treat some veterans' chronic pain.

Two years later, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has embraced the therapy based on the traditional Chinese practice of inserting needles into the body to treat maladies. The VA is using acupuncture at clinics across the country. There is little research to support the effectiveness of acupuncture, but the federal agency now plans to study its use.

The willingness to try alternative methods of treating pain reflects the VA's need to reduce the use of addictive opioids for the thousands of men and women who joined the military with chronic pain or develop it as civilians.

Opioids have caused a nationwide epidemic of overdose, and VA doctors recognized their own addiction problem stemming from both chronic conditions and grievances mental and physical injuries. One in 10 servicemembers returning from Iraq or Afghanistan and seen at a VA office has a problem with alcohol or drugs.

It also represents an effort across the VA health care system to focus more broadly on "wellness" and the department now calls "whole health," with doctors and patients developing health goals such as regaining the ability to play a sport rather than simply treating one disease at a time.

For a large proportion of veterans living with chronic pain, plans often include weight loss, exercise and dietary improvements and other non-drug therapies such as massage, yoga and mindfulness training in conjunction with or instead of traditional medicine. The acupuncture treatment, piloted in Baltimore, was first taken up by two dozen other VA centers, is part of that approach.

"We recognized that we were not treating chronic pain very well," said Dr. Carol Bowman, medical director of patient and family-centered care for the VA Maryland Health Care System. "Opioid pills don't work long-term. ... We'll continue to treat disease and sickness and other sources of pain, but we want to



ULLYSES MUNOZ AND KENNETH K. LAM/Baltimore Sun video

Baltimore's VA Medical Center is joining other VA centers in turning to battlefield acupuncture, among other therapies, to treat pain in former servicemembers in an effort to reduce reliance on opioids.

take a whole-health approach that teaches people how to be healthy."

The program is aimed at patients like John DeLost, who injured his left knee cross-country skiing while stationed in Alaska with the Army in the 1970s. Over-reliance on his right knee and years of hard labor left him with ongoing pain. After knee surgery, DeLost, 68, couldn't walk well and opioid painkillers were no longer helping. Ice, massage and a big weight loss were providing only some relief. The medical marijuana he wanted to try was off limits to the VA because cannabis remains illegal at the federal level. A recent session of acupuncture gave him little relief from pain but made him feel better in other ways.

"I feel a little more energy. I can breathe better," said DeLost, after a VA doctor put five tiny needles into each of his ears. "It didn't take the pain away, but it makes me feel good."

DeLost said he's still not sure how or why it works, a sentiment shared by many medical experts.

"There is no reason to think acupuncture would work," said Steven L. Salzberg, professor of biomedical engineering, computer science and biostatistics at Johns Hopkins' medical school. "It would be really shocking if it did."

In Salzberg's view, acupuncture is not only "quackery" being pushed on veterans who have real pain from medical problems, but

unethical because it carries a small risk of serious infection.

A review of published acupuncture studies by the National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health, which is part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, found mixed results. Some studies found that acupuncture done properly — with needles placed deeply enough in specific places — was a little more beneficial for some kinds of pain than when it's done incorrectly. But people even found improper acupuncture a little more beneficial than no treatment or a placebo pill.

Andrew Vickers, a biostatistician whose studies were included in the review, concluded that acupuncture's benefit, even if it's just "a little," could help some people. For example, he said, one examination found that acupuncture reduced the number of a patient's migraines by 22 days per year, but they still had a lot of bad headaches.

"Who defines a little or a lot and what's meaningful to patients?" said Vickers, an attending research methodologist at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York. "Whether it was worth having acupuncture or not was a subjective opinion."

Vickers said if many veterans believe they get some relief from acupuncture, and cost and risk remain low, then it may be reasonable to offer it, though he said the practice should have standards and continue to be studied.

Research of drug ecstasy to treat PTSD gets boost

By NIKKI WENTLING
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Pineapple Fund, an anonymous benefactor's initiative to give away \$86 million in digital currency, plans to donate \$4 million for the study of the drug MDMA, commonly known as ecstasy, as a treatment for post-traumatic stress disorder.

The money will go to the nonprofit Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies, or MAPS, which has included veterans in its studies of MDMA since 2010. Last year, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration designated the illegal psychedelic drug as a breakthrough therapy, allowing it to move through the regulatory process more quickly.

The \$4 million is a matching grant, and MAPS must raise another \$4 million before March 10 to receive it, MAPS announced Wednesday in a news release. The plan is for the nonprofit to raise the total amount necessary to complete the third phase of clinical trials of MDMA-assisted psychotherapy.

The Pineapple Fund was announced in December on the social media site Reddit by an anonymous donor, "Pine." The donor began the initiative after a sudden, dramatic rise in the price index of bitcoins, a cryptocurrency. As of Wednesday, Pine had given out \$20 million in bitcoins to 23 charities. The donor gave to MAPS once already — \$9.89 bitcoin valued at \$1 million — to fund the MDMA trials.

"PTSD is a severe condition that affects everyone from sexual assault survivors to military veterans," the secret donor said in a written statement. "MDMA-assisted psychotherapy has shown great promise. We're offering the matching grant because we think the psychedelic and cryptocurrency communities can work together to finish funding Phase 3 clinical trials."

During the trials, participants

The money will go to the nonprofit Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies, which has included veterans in its MDMA studies since 2010.

take a dose of MDMA and a clinician guides participants through eight hours of intensive psychotherapy. The process is repeated two more times, each session one month apart. The goal is to get to the root cause of someone's PTSD, and not just treat the symptoms like other drugs do, said Michael Mithoefer, a clinical investigator who is involved in the study.

The idea has seen positive results so far, according to MAPS.

The 107 people involved in Phase 2 trials had chronic PTSD that was severe enough to resist treatment from traditional methods. Two months after they completed three sessions of MDMA-assisted psychotherapy, 61 percent of them no longer qualified for a PTSD diagnosis, according to MAPS statistics.

Rick Doblin, MAPS founder and director, said the Pineapple Fund is a "dream come true" that highlights cryptocurrency as a potential new source of philanthropy and social change.

"The [cryptocurrency] community is helping to lead the way, not only in decentralized technologies and currencies, but in giving the gift of MDMA-assisted psychotherapy to the world in order to heal trauma and bring greater compassion to psychiatry and medicine," Doblin said.

A list of charities the Pineapple Fund has supported can be found at pineapplefund.org.

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Nonprofit plans Neb. home for combat-wounded veterans

Associated Press

OMAHA, Neb. — A veterans and family support group is planning a residential home in eastern Nebraska for combat-wounded veterans who have no one to provide day-to-day care.

Wounded Warriors Family Support, the Omaha-based national nonprofit founded to support families of those wounded or killed in combat, has begun planning the 24-bed facility. A 10-acre

parcel has been donated on the north side of Omaha, contingent on the group raising the money needed.

University of Nebraska Regent and former Omaha Mayor Hal Daub, who serves on the group's board, said he's confident the organization will be able to raise an estimated \$6 million to \$10 million. The money would cover construction and equipment costs and fund an endowment.

"This is an exciting, unique living accommodation for a very special group of men and women who have served and sacrificed for our country," Daub told the Omaha World-Herald.

The home would be designed for men and women who need help with daily activities, such as cooking, bathing and dressing. It would not provide skilled nursing, although the group wants to make provisions for such care.

The alternatives for disabled veterans with no family support are assisted living centers and veterans homes, which officials said tend to be populated by older residents and those without the same combat experiences. All four Nebraska veterans homes usually have waiting lists.

Retired Marine Corps Col. Joe Folsom, who founded the group, got the idea for the home after he toured a military hospital

and saw a brain-injured soldier being aided by his sister and mother. Folsom wondered what would happen to the wounded man when family members could no longer care for him.

The home will be known as Dunham House, named in honor of Marine Capt. Jason Dunham. He was posthumously awarded a Medal of Honor for smothering a grenade with his body to protect fellow Marines in Iraq in 2005.

NATION



CHRIS CARLSON/AP

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents serve an employment audit notice at a 7-Eleven convenience store Wednesday in Los Angeles. Agents said they targeted about 100 7-Elevens Wednesday to open employment audits and interview workers.

Immigration agents descend on 7-Eleven stores in 17 states

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES—Seven immigration agents filed into a 7-Eleven store before dawn Wednesday, waited for people to go through the checkout line and told arriving customers and a driver delivering beer to wait outside. A federal inspection was underway, they said.

Within 20 minutes, they verified that the cashier had a valid green card and served notice on the owner to produce hiring records in three days that deal with employees' immigration status.

The well-rehearsed scene, executed with quiet efficiency in Los Angeles' Koreatown, played out at about 100 7-Eleven stores in 17 states and the District of Columbia, an operation that officials

called the largest immigration action against an employer under Donald Trump's presidency. The employment audits and interviews with store workers could lead to criminal charges or fines. And they appeared to open a new front in Trump's expansion of immigration enforcement, which has brought a 40 percent increase in deportation arrests and pledges to spend billions of dollars on a border wall with Mexico.

A top official at U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement said the audits were "the first of many" and "a harbinger of what's to come" for employers.

"This is what we're going to see for this year and what you're going to see more and more of is these large-scale compliance inspections, just for starters," said

Derek Benner, acting head of ICE's Homeland Security Investigations, which oversees cases against employers. After the inspections, officials plan to look at whether the cases warrant administrative action or criminal investigations, Benner said.

7-Eleven Stores Inc., based in Irving, Texas, said in a statement that the owners of its franchises are responsible for hiring and verifying work eligibility. The chain with more than 8,600 convenience stores in the U.S. said it has previously ended franchise agreements for owners convicted of breaking employment laws.

Wednesday's actions were aimed at store owners and managers, though 21 workers were arrested on suspicion of being in the country illegally.

Trump sets path for 1st Medicaid work requirement

By RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — In a major policy shift that could affect millions of low-income people, the Trump administration said Thursday it is offering a path for states that want to seek work requirements on Medicaid recipients.

Seema Verma, head of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, said work and community involvement can make a positive difference in people's lives and in their health. Still, the plan probably will face strong political opposition and even legal challenges over concerns people would lose coverage.

Medicaid is a federal-state collaboration covering more than 70 million people, or about 1 in 5 Americans, and that makes it the largest government health insurance program. It was expanded under President Barack Obama, with an option that has allowed states to cover millions more low-income adults; many have chosen not to provide health insurance.

People are not legally required to hold a job to be on Medicaid, but states traditionally can seek federal waivers to test new ideas for the program.

The administration's latest action spells out safeguards that states should consider to obtain federal approval for waivers imposing work requirements on "able-bodied" adults. Technically, those waivers would be "demonstration projects." In practical

terms, they would represent new requirements for beneficiaries in those states.

The administration said 10 states — mostly conservative ones — have applied for waivers involving work requirements or community involvement. They are Arizona, Arkansas, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Utah and Wisconsin. Advocates for low-income people say they expect Kentucky's waiver to be approved shortly.

"Medicaid needs to be more flexible so that states can best address the needs of this population," Verma said in a statement.

For close to a year, the administration has signaled an interest in helping states that want to institute work requirements.

Advocates for low-income people said work has never been a requirement for Medicaid, a program originally intended as a health program for the poor and disabled.

"It is a very major change in Medicaid that for the first time people said work has never been a requirement for Medicaid, a program originally intended as a health program for the poor and disabled."

A study from the nonpartisan Kaiser Family Foundation found that a surprising number of working-age adults on Medicaid are already employed. Nearly 60 percent work either full time or part time, mainly for employers that don't offer health insurance.

Another GOP governor seeks exclusion from offshore drilling

By MATTHEW DALY
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Opposition to the Trump administration's plan to expand offshore drilling is mounting as Democrats from coastal states accuse President Donald Trump of punishing states with Democratic leaders and a second Republican governor asks to withdraw his state from the plan.

Democrats said Trump and Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke were being hypocritical by agreeing to a request by Florida's Republican governor to withdraw from the drilling plan but not making the same accommodation to states with Democratic governors.

Democratic Rep. Adam Schiff, of California, said on Twitter that his state, "like Florida, has hundreds of miles of beautiful coastline and a governor who wants to keep it that way. Or is that not

enough for blue states?"

"If local voices matter why haven't they excluded Virginia?" asked Sen. Tim Kaine, D-Va. "Is it because the governor of Florida is a Republican and the Virginia governor is a Democrat?"

The complaints came as South Carolina's Republican governor said Wednesday he is seeking an exemption from the proposed drilling expansion, a move that will test the relationship between Trump and one of his earliest supporters.

Gov. Henry McMaster told reporters that risks associated with drilling pose a serious threat to South Carolina's lush coastline and \$20 billion tourism industry.

"We cannot afford to take a chance with the beauty, the majesty and the economic value and vitality of our wonderful coastline in South Carolina," McMaster said.

Opposition to drilling is bipar-

tisan within South Carolina's congressional delegation. All three House members who represent the state's 190 miles of coastline said they are against the expansion plan. Two of the three are Republicans, including Rep. Mark Sanford, a former governor who said Zinke had set a precedent by honoring Florida's request for an exemption.

"What's good for the goose is good for the gander," Sanford said, adding that Republicans should respect local wishes.

In Virginia, Gov. Rep. Scott Taylor joining Kaine and Gov.-elect Ralph Northam, a Democrat, in opposing the drilling plan. Sen. Mark Warner, D-Va., called Trump's plan "a complete nonstarter."

Sen. Jeff Merkley, D-Ore., said on Twitter that "the only science @SecretaryZinke follows is political science. He'll reverse course to protect fellow Repub-

licans in Florida, but not to protect coastlines and jobs across the rest of the country? Totally unacceptable."

Heather Swift, a spokeswoman for Zinke, accused Kaine and other Democrats of taking cheap shots at her boss.

"The secretary has said since day one that he is interested in the local voice, those governors would like to request meetings with the secretary, they are absolutely welcome to do so," she said. "Their criticism is empty pandering."

As of Wednesday, only McMaster and Democratic Gov. Roy Cooper of North Carolina, had requested a meeting with Zinke on offshore drilling, Swift said.

Zinke said after a brief meeting with Gov. Rick Scott, R-Fla., at the Tallahassee airport Tuesday that drilling in Florida waters would be "off the table," despite a plan that proposed drilling in the

Eastern Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean off Florida. The change of course — just five days after Zinke announced the offshore drilling plan — highlights the political importance of Florida, where Trump narrowly won the state's 29 electoral votes in the 2016 election and has encouraged Scott to run for Senate.

The state is also important economically, with a multibillion-dollar tourism business built on sunshine and miles of white sandy beaches. And Florida is where Trump has a winter home in Palm Beach. Trump spent his Christmas and New Year's break at his Mar-a-Lago resort.

Zinke said Tuesday that "Florida is obviously unique" and that the decision to remove the state came after meetings and discussion with Scott, a Trump ally and a likely candidate for the Senate seat now held by Democrat Bill Nelson.

NATION

State Department updates travel advisories



ERIC MARTI/AP

Investigators mark the spot where spent bullet casings fell next to several bodies lying on a road in the town of Navolato, Sinaloa state, Mexico, in June.

5 Mexican states get highest US 'do not travel' warning

By MARK STEVENSON
Associated Press

MEXICO CITY — Five states in Mexico now have the sternest “do not travel” advisories under a revamped U.S. State Department system unveiled Wednesday, putting them on the same level as war-torn countries like Syria, Yemen and Somalia.

The five states are Tamaulipas on the U.S. border and Sinaloa, Colima, Michoacan and Guerrero on the Pacific coast. All the states are hot spots of drug cartel activity, either hosting trafficking routes or extensive drug-crop cultivation.

The State Department previously had discouraged travel to all or parts of those states but the new warnings are sterner, placing them on a level 4 warning, the highest level of potential danger.

Mexico as a whole has a level 2 rating, meaning Americans should “exercise increased caution” because of concerns about crime. But an additional 11 Mexican states got a level 3 warning Wednesday, which urges people to “reconsider travel” there. Mexico has 31 states, half of which are now under level 3 or 4 warnings.

Those states where Americans are urged to reconsider travel include the State of Mexico

— Mexico’s most populous state, which includes most suburbs of Mexico City — and Jalisco, home to the city of Guadalajara, the Puerto Vallarta resorts and the lakeside expat community of Chapala and Ajijic. But the travel advisory said there are “no restrictions on U.S. government employees for stays in ... Guadalajara, Puerto Vallarta, Chapala, and Ajijic.”

Most of northern Mexico, including the border states of Chihuahua, Coahuila, Nuevo Leon and Sonora as well as Durango, Zacatecas and San Luis Potosi, are under level 3 warnings.

Mexico’s federal tourism department was not immediately available to comment on the new warnings.

But the government’s Mexico Tourism Board said in a statement that “Mexico’s major international tourism destinations have been externally listed as having no travel restrictions,” apparently a reference to major resorts like Cancun, Puerto Vallarta and Huatulco.

However, at least two Mexican resorts — Xtapa-Zihuatanejo and Acapulco — are in a do-not-travel state, Guerrero, and last year the State Department extended a total ban on personal travel by U.S. government personnel there.

Changes are intended to make rankings more understandable

By CAROL MORELLO
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — The State Department on Wednesday unveiled four tiered categories to warn travelers of potential dangers overseas, using common-sense language ranging from “Exercise normal precaution” to “Do not travel.”

The new rankings replace the vague and often-confusing system of issuing “travel alerts” for short-term dangers posed by events like health epidemics or mass protests and “travel warnings” for long-standing concerns like armed conflict or political instability. The new rankings are applied to every country in the world, and even Antarctica.

Michelle Bernier-Toth, head of Overseas Citizens Services, said the changes were made because so few people understood the distinctions in the previous, broad rankings.

“I personally was tired of explaining the difference between a travel warning and a travel alert, even to some of my colleagues,” she said. “We needed to make it more accessible to people, to make sure the information was more easily understood using plain language.”

Under the new rankings, Level One, the lowest advisory, signals a need to “exercise normal precautions” in places where there is no more than the usual risk involved in international travel. Canada and Australia are among the countries ranked Level One.

Level Two means “exercise increased caution” for nations where there is a heightened risk to safety. Many countries in Western Europe, where there have been terrorist attacks in recent years, are listed as Level Two. Antarctica is also a Level Two.

Level three translates bluntly as “reconsider travel,” with the recommendation to avoid going

to countries with serious risks. Turkey, Russia and Venezuela are considered Level Three.

Level Four is for countries with a “greater likelihood of life-threatening risks” in which the U.S. government could be limited in its ability to help. Travelers already in those countries are advised to leave as soon as it is safe.

Eleven countries come with the do-not-travel recommendation, most in Africa and the Middle East — Mali, Central African Republic, Libya, South Sudan, Somalia, Yemen, Syria, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan and North Korea.

In addition, the new system will explain why the advisory was made, with one-letter logos: C for crime, T for terrorism, U for civil unrest, H for health risks, R for natural disasters, E for special events like an election and O for some other reason.

U.S. citizens are not banned from traveling to Level Four countries. The one exception is North Korea, where the State Department has prohibited citizens from using their U.S. passports to visit without first obtaining waivers.

Cuba, which last year came with the travel advisory not to travel there, is now listed as Level Three. Bernier-Toth told reporters it was not listed as a Level Four, even though most U.S. diplomats have been ordered to leave the country over concerns they were targeted for attacks, because it still has not been determined what caused embassy personnel to suffer hearing and brain injuries.

In some countries, U.S. embassy personnel are restricted from visiting particular states or provinces where the risks are considered higher. The State Department calls it the no-double-statement principle.

“We let people know what restrictions we’ve imposed on ourselves,” Bernier-Toth said.

Mo. Gov. Greitens acknowledges affair, denies blackmail

By SUMMER BALLENTINE
Associated Press

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. — Missouri Gov. Eric Greitens is acknowledging he’s been “unfaithful” in his marriage but has denied allegations that he blackmailed the woman to stay quiet, following a bombshell news report that overshadowed his annual address to the legislature.

The Republican governor and his wife released a statement late Wednesday after the St. Louis television station KMOV reported that he had a sexual relationship with his former hairdresser in 2015. The station’s report, released after Greitens gave his State of the State address, said the woman’s ex-husband alleged Greitens photographed her nude and threatened to publicize the images if she spoke about the affair.

“A few years ago, before Eric was elect-

ed Governor, there was a time when he was unfaithful in our marriage,” said the statement from Greitens and his wife, Sheena. “This was a deeply personal mistake. Eric took responsibility, and we dealt with that together honestly and privately.”

Greitens, a first-time candidate, rose to office in the same November 2016 election that brought President Donald Trump to power. His campaign capitalized on his military service as a Navy SEAL, his work as founder of a veterans’ charity “and most importantly, a proud husband and father.” The Greitens married in 2011 and have two young sons.

During the campaign, Greitens cast him-



Greitens

self as an outsider going up against a career politician, the state’s Democratic attorney general. He’s not up for re-election until 2020. He has barely hidden his political ambitions, and reserved the web address ericgreitensforpresident.com years ago.

The woman reputed to be involved did not comment on the record to the station, which did not name her. But her ex-husband, who also was not named, provided an audio recording he made to KMOV in which the woman gives details about a sexual encounter she said she had with Greitens in March 2015 at his St. Louis home. The woman did not know her then-husband was recording their conversation.

The March 2015 encounter came after Greitens opened a committee to explore a bid for Missouri governor but before he officially announced his candidacy. She says on the tape that he invited her downstairs

at his home because he wanted to show her “how to do a proper pull-up.”

She says, “I knew he was being sexual and I still let him. And he used some sort of tape, I don’t what it was, and taped my hands to these rings and then put a blindfold on me.”

She says she later realized he took a photo of her. “I saw a flash through the blindfold and he said, ‘You’re never going to mention my name.’”

The statement from Greitens and his wife doesn’t address the affair specifically or the allegations, but in a separate statement late Wednesday, Greitens’ attorney, Jim Bennett, said, “There was no blackmail and that claim is false.”

The ex-husband told KMOV that law enforcement had been in touch, and Al Watkins, an attorney for the ex-husband, backed up his client’s claim.

NATION

Trump-tied group: Memo backs claim over emails

By STEPHEN BRAUN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A group representing President Donald Trump's transition team is pressing the General Services Administration to turn over a memo purportedly sent by an agency official to special counsel Robert Mueller's team that would offer proof that tens of thousands of emails should have been delivered to investigators.

The transition group, Trump for America, claims in a letter sent Monday to GSA officials that an agency memo supposedly sent last June to Mueller's team provides evidence that the emails later handed over to Mueller's investigators were legally owned by the transition. The vast cache of emails never should have been delivered to the Russia election-meddling investigators without Trump for America's authorization, a lawyer for the transition group wrote in the letter obtained Wednesday by The Associated Press.

The transition lawyer, Kory Langhofer, did not explain how the group was made aware that the GSA memo exists but said "it was our understanding that the document was sent in June by the GSA's top lawyer, Richard Becker, to Mueller's team. Becker has since died. Langhofer's letter to the GSA requested the memo under the Freedom of Information Act.

"The GSA had no right to access or control the records but was simply serving as Trump for America's records custodian," Langhofer wrote. He added that the GSA "unlawfully" handed over "thousands of private and privileged (presidential transition team) emails to the Special



CAROLYN KASTER/AP

President Donald Trump speaks Wednesday during a news conference with Norwegian Prime Minister Erna Solberg in the White House.

Counsel's office, and failed to notify (Trump for America) of the production."

GSA spokeswoman Pamela Dixon declined Wednesday to comment on the transition group's letter. Peter Carr, spokesman for the special counsel, also declined to comment, citing an earlier statement that when the counsel's office obtains emails during its investigations, "we have secured either the account owner's consent or appropriate criminal process."

Ken Nahigian, Trump for America's executive director, said the transition made the records request to the GSA to respond to the agency's role in the "unlawful seizure of Transition documents by Mr. Mueller."

Nahigian said the agency's cooperation with the special counsel without the knowledge of the transition "will irreversibly chill the operations of future presidential transition teams."

The GSA typically has provided office space, phones and computers to presidential transition teams in recent years after Trump's presidential election victory in November 2016, his transi-

tion officials relied on the federal agency's site to host and archive its electronic communications. The transition's emails were slated for deletion after Trump's inauguration, but the transition asked the GSA to retain the records after receiving document requests from Congress last spring.

Some criminal law experts have expressed skepticism about the transition's claims to legal ownership of the emails, but Langhofer and other transition officials insist that Becker had agreed with Trump for America both in phone conversations and in the sought-after memo that the emails belonged to the transition.

Langhofer said that Becker "acknowledged unequivocally" that the transition team "owned and controlled" the emails and that "the GSA had no right to access or control the records but was simply serving as TFA's records custodian." In Becker's absence last August, his deputy, Lenny Loewentritt, made the decision to turn over the trove of transition emails to Mueller's team without notifying Trump for America, Langhofer said.

Trump 'unlikely' to OK interview in Russia probe

By MARY CLARE JALONICK
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump says that it "seems unlikely" that he'd give an interview in special counsel Robert Mueller's investigation into potential coordination between Russia and the Trump campaign.

Trump said "we'll see what happens" when asked if he'd provide an interview to Mueller's team.

"When they have no collusion and nobody's found any collusion at any level, it seems unlikely that you'd even have an interview," Trump said Wednesday during a joint news conference with the prime minister of Norway.

The special counsel's team of investigators has expressed interest in speaking with Trump, but no details have been worked out. Trump's lawyers previously have stated their determination to cooperate with requests in the probe, which has already resulted in charges against four of Trump's campaign advisors.

Trump called the investigation a "phony cloud" over his administration. "It has hurt our government," he said. "It was a Democrat hoax."

Trump's words differed from what he said at a news conference in June, shortly after fired FBI Director James Comey had told Congress that Trump asked him for a pledge of loyalty. Trump de-

nied that, and said he'd be "100 percent" willing to tell his version of events under oath. He said he'd be "glad to" speak to Mueller about it.

The comments came after Trump lashed out at the investigations on Twitter on Wednesday morning, urging Republicans to take control of the inquiries and repeating his claim that they are on a "witch hunt."

"There was no collusion, everybody including the Dems knows there was no collusion, & yet on and on it goes," he tweeted. "Russia & the world is laughing at the stupidity they are witnessing. Republicans should finally take control!"

In a separate tweet Wednesday morning, Trump accused Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., of being "underhanded and a disgrace" for disclosing details of a dossier of allegations about his ties to Russia during the presidential campaign.

A day earlier, Feinstein, released the transcript of the Senate Judiciary Committee's closed-door August interview with an official from the political opposition research firm Fusion GPS, which commissioned the dossier. She released the transcript of Glenn Simpson's interview over the objections of the committee's Republican chairman, Iowa Sen. Chuck Grassley. She is the top Democrat on the panel.

Purged from voting rolls while deployed, Ohio vet demands answers

By DEREK HAWKINS
The Washington Post

Every year, Ohio officials scrub an untold number of names from state voter rolls under an aggressive and, some argue, unconstitutional policy that purges people who fail to vote in consecutive elections.

Joe Helle, the Democratic mayor of Oak Harbor, a small village near Lake Erie, said he was once among the disenfranchised. On Wednesday, in a dramatic exchange at the steps of the U.S. Supreme Court, he confronted the man he said ultimately was responsible for twice barring him from casting ballots.

The moment was more than six years in the making. In 2011, Helle, 31, an Army veteran, returned home from tours in Iraq and Afghanistan and tried to vote in a local election, only to be told that poll workers couldn't find his name. A couple of months later, in the general election, he was blocked again. This time, board of elections officials revealed he had been removed from the state's roll due to "inactivity."

He started crying," Helle told The Washington Post. "To come home after defend-

ing that fundamental right and to be told that I couldn't exercise it, that was heartbreaking."

Ohio's voter registration rules are some of the country's most punitive. Voters who fail to cast ballots for two years, and then fail to confirm their addresses, are purged from the rolls.

Since 2011, the practice has been overseen by Secretary of State Jon Husted who, like other supporters of such measures, has said it is necessary to curb fraud and to ensure the integrity of the state electoral system.

But a group of Ohioans like Helle allege they were wrongfully disenfranchised under the "use-it-or-lose-it" policy, as it's casually known. Purporting to represent thousands of others of similarly situated Ohioans, they sued Husted in federal court, arguing the policy violates the U.S. Constitution and voting rights laws. They were joined by the American Civil Liberties Union of Ohio and a homeless-advocacy



Helle

group.

On Wednesday morning, after the lawsuit climbed through the lower courts over 18 months, the Supreme Court heard closely watched oral arguments in the case.

Justices peppered the attorneys representing the parties with questions about whether the policy was a reasonable and legally sound way for the state to prune its voter lists. But the real fireworks happened outside.

When Husted emerged from the building, Helle was waiting for him, flanked by supporters and camera crews.

"We believe our state is one where we make it easy to vote and hard to cheat," Husted said, according to NPR. "We make every effort possible to reach out to voters to get them registered to vote."

Helle, who is not a plaintiff in the litigation, pushed back.

"I never received any such notice," he told Husted, "because I was an active-duty soldier that maintained my home of record in the state of Ohio, came back home after defending that right, and could not exercise it because of this archaic, terrible policy." Video of the exchange captured by

Cleveland.com showed the two standing just a few feet apart as a group of onlookers watched. Husted pursed his lips as he listened to Helle talk. Helle, he said, didn't seem to grasp the policy.

"All you have to do is use your right to vote," Husted said.

"From a mountainside, sir?" responded Helle, a former airborne infantry sergeant. Husted told him the registration process took only minutes.

"What about soldiers serving overseas anywhere in the world, riding around in a Humvee, conducting missions 20 hours a day?" Helle asked. "What I know is that I was wrongfully purged."

"You weren't wrongfully purged," Husted said. He then walked off, with Helle and several people behind him chanting, "Shame!"

Voter fraud is rare both in Ohio and nationwide. Probes of supposed voting irregularities routinely fail to turn up evidence of widespread or even marginal instances of it. In Ohio, Husted's own review referred a mere 52 cases of possible fraud for prosecution or further investigation, as Cleveland.com reported.

NATION

Poverty and segregation persist in US schools

By MARIA DANILOVA

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Too often, low-income, black and Latino students end up in schools with crumbling walls, old textbooks and unqualified teachers, according to a report released Thursday by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights.

The commission said inequities are caused by the fact that schools are most funded with state and local tax dollars. More than 92 percent of funding comes from nonfederal sources, according to the Education Department.

The resulting imbalance renders "the education available to millions of American public school students profoundly unequal," the commission said.

For instance, the authors said, 33 percent of high schools with high black and Latino enrollment offer calculus, compared with 56 percent of high schools with low black and Latino student populations. Nationwide, 48 percent of schools offer the rigorous math course.

On average, school districts spend around \$11,000 per student each year, but the highest poverty districts receive an average of \$1,200 less per child than the least poor districts, while districts serving the largest numbers of minority students get about \$2,000 less than those serving the fewest students of color, according to the study.

The authors called on Congress to create incentives for states to adopt equitable funding systems, to ensure adequate fund-

ing for students with disabilities and to increase federal funding to supplement local dollars for school districts that are underfunded.

"Federal, state, and local government should develop incentives to promote communities that are not racially segregated and do not have concentrated poverty," the report said.

Whether channeling more money to schools in underserved communities will help improve the quality of education is a subject of academic debate.

"Money matters. If you don't have it, you cannot spend it," said Bruce Baker, a professor of education at Rutgers University. Baker said that states should do a better job in raising education funding and in equalizing spending among school districts. He

also called for a greater federal role in making sure that less affluent states that need additional education funding get it.

"Having federal money can help states that cannot help themselves, and federal pressure can encourage states to do the right thing, to raise enough resources and put them where they are needed."

Eric Hanushek, a fellow at the Hoover Institution of Stanford University, disagrees.

"Money is not the secret recipe," Hanushek said. "How much is spent on schools is not as important as how the money is spent."

For instance, he said, simply increasing the salaries of all teachers in a high-need school district won't have as much of an impact as identifying high-performing teachers and increasing their salaries.

Frigid weather exposes cracks in school upkeep

By DAVID MCFADDEN
AND CAROLYN THOMPSON

Associated Press

BALTIMORE — The recent spell of cold weather exposed the poor state of school buildings in many big-city districts, including Baltimore, where the failure of heating systems closed dozens of institutions after children were left shivering in frigid classrooms.

Schools were challenged in other cities affected by the cold snap, including Philadelphia and Bridgeport, Connecticut's largest city, as pipes burst, heating units froze and other pieces of decades-old infrastructure gave out under the strain of record-breaking cold.

It's no wonder; investment in school construction and maintenance has been falling steadily since the recession, according to an analysis by The Associated Press.

Experts who have been sounding alarms about the state of many public school buildings say the problems that struck last week are a direct result of years of inadequate funding for basic upkeep. The need is especially great in urban centers where older buildings serve poorer children and maintenance is often put off until it becomes an exponentially more costly emergency repair, said Mary Filardo, executive director of the nonprofit 21st Century School Fund, which advocates for better facilities.

"The systems are vulnerable because they're old, and they're well beyond their useful life, and so they fail," Filardo said.

In Baltimore, six schools were still closed early this week, down from 60 at the height of the district's heating crisis. Images circulated on social media last week of Baltimore students bundled up in winter jackets in their classrooms and rubbing their hands together for warmth.

At Lakewood Elementary School, a 1960s-era building in an East Baltimore neighborhood marred by derelict row homes, children were not in Monday after pipes burst just as buses

began dropping youngsters off. The school reopened for classes Tuesday.

As Sasha Harmon, 29, picked up her son at the school Tuesday, she expressed outrage that more has not been done to stop the deterioration of the city's schools.

"This problem is not new. I remember being a little kid and wearing my winter jacket in class because the heating was screwed up," Harmon said. "Baltimore needs to do a lot better for our children. It is ridiculous things like this just keep happening."

Roughly half of the city's 171 schools experienced heating problems during an "unprecedented challenge" amid days of frigid weather, said Jonja Brooks Santelises, who leads Baltimore City Public Schools. She praised city workers and private contractors who tried to get on top of the problem but said "decades of mess-up" led up to the latest troubles.

As in other districts around the country, Baltimore has seen spending on infrastructure fall in recent years.

Nationwide, spending on construction and maintenance of school facilities, including staff salaries and benefits, peaked in the 2008-09 school year at an inflation-adjusted \$132 billion, according to the AP analysis of federal data on school spending. That spending fell to \$102 billion in 2013-14, the most recent year for which data are available.

The American Society of Civil Engineers gave public school buildings an overall grade of D+ in its 2017 report card, finding that about 1 in 4 of the country's nearly 100,000 school buildings are in fair or poor condition, and there's a funding gap of \$38 billion between what schools are and should be spending to renew facilities.

At Fairborn City Schools near Dayton, Ohio, water lines burst as temperatures plummeted, and heating units stopped working last week in two schools built in the 1950s. In one, the heating system was so old that contractors trying to make emergency



PATRICK SEMANSKY/AP

Teacher Loraine Wilson, top right, helps bundle up pre-kindergarten students as they wait to be picked up at the end of a school day at Lakewood Elementary School in Baltimore. Lakewood students were sent home Monday morning after pipes burst in the freezing weather.



PATRICK SEMANSKY/AP

A worker inspects a heating and cooling unit in a classroom at Calverton Elementary-Middle School in Baltimore. Burst pipes at the school prompted a shutdown of the main boiler.

repairs had to take parts from an old, now-unused heating system in another district school that has a newer system installed, Superintendent Mark North said.

"You know, these things are antiquities," North said.

In another school, the heating problems seemed to cascade, with one unit failing each time another was fixed, North said. The issues required \$30,000 in repairs and canceled classes for

two days as the heat was restored, the water mopped up, books and furniture were moved and tile was replaced.

A debate over who is to blame for the crisis in Baltimore is underway.

Baltimore's district has suffered under "woeful mismanagement," said Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan, who announced \$2.5 million in emergency funding Monday. Hogan, a Republican who is

running for a second term, said he plans to submit legislation creating a new investigator general's office to address mismanagement and a lack of accountability by local school districts.

"When it comes to the problems in our local school systems, it is not a funding issue," Hogan said. "It's an accountability and management and competency issue."

Local education officials did not directly respond to Hogan's criticisms when contacted by the AP.

There has been "a woeful lack of attention over many years" to infrastructure problems plaguing public schools, and many are not fit for children, said Democratic Mayor Catherine Pugh. Her administration launched a \$1 billion initiative last year to close some Baltimore schools, modernize others and construct new school buildings.

Meanwhile, a crowdfunding campaign spearheaded last week by a Coppin State University student aims to buy hundreds of space heaters and warm clothes for students trying to stay warm in Baltimore's public schools. It had raised over \$78,000 by Tuesday morning, well over its \$20,000 goal.

NATION

Some fans of Trump and pot feel loyalties go up in smoke

By PATRICK WHITTLE
Associated Press

PORTLAND, Maine — The Trump administration's anti-marijuana move has some members of the president's voting base fuming.

Fans of President Donald Trump who use marijuana say Attorney General Jeff Sessions' move to tighten federal oversight of the drug is the first time they've felt let down by the man they helped elect. The move feels especially punitive to Trump voters who work in the growing industry around legalized marijuana that has taken root in states of all political stripes.

It remains to be seen whether Trump's pot-loving voters will take their anger to the ballot box in 2018 and 2020. But pro-legalization conservatives also are chiding the administration's anti-pot move as an affront to personal liberties and states' rights.

"Trump needs to realize that a lot of his supporters are pro-cannabis and it would be extremely hurtful to them if he allowed Sessions to move forward with this," said Damara Kelsø,

a Trump voter who runs Sugar Shack Farms, a marijuana grower in Eugene, Ore. "It's not lazy, pothead smokers smoking weed all day in their parents' basement."

Sessions' move allows federal prosecutors to decide what to do when state rules conflict with federal rules. It comes as legalization of marijuana is at an all-time high in popularity with Republicans.

A Gallup poll from last year found 51 percent of Republicans expressed support for legalization of the drug.

It was the first time a majority of GOP supporters supported the idea and represented a jump of 9 percentage points from the previous year. In the early 2000s, only about 1 in 5 Republicans agreed with legalization.

Legalization also has flourished at the state level. Maine, Nevada, Massachusetts and California all voted to make recreational marijuana use legal for adults in 2016. It is also legal in Oregon, Washington, Colorado, Alaska and Washington, D.C. Alaska and Maine gave Trump electoral votes in 2016.

Marijuana legalization is typically most popular with the

libertarian-leaning wing of the Republican Party. But any such Republicans who felt Trump would be a pro-marijuana president were misguided, said Jeffrey Miron, a Harvard University economist who studies the economics of libertarianism with a focus on illegal drugs.

Weed-loving Trump fans might be experiencing buyer's remorse, but it's too early to say whether that could make a difference at the voting polls, Miron said.

"Libertarians certainly knew when he appointed Jeff Sessions that there was a serious risk in an escalation of the war on drugs," he said. "I think you get what you pay for."

Still, some of Trump's high-profile supporters are criticizing the move.

Roger Stone, a former Trump campaign adviser with whom the president has a long, rocky history, shared a video on Facebook on Jan. 7 urging Trump to support legalization and to block Sessions' move. And some Republicans in Congress also have slammed the decision.

"We have a Constitution to protect people from the federal gov-



PROVIDED BY ZAC MERCAUTO/AP

Zac Mercauto, holding a package of marijuana cookies Wednesday in Fryeburg, Maine, is a proponent of legalized pot who supports President Donald Trump but not his administration's anti-pot stance.

ernment," said Rep. Jason Lewis, R-Minn., a Trump voter, in an interview. "This is a longstanding limited-government principle."

Trump fans who use medical marijuana also are concerned they could lose access to treatment. In rural Fryeburg, Maine, college student Zac Mercauto drives two hours round-trip, he said, to buy marijuana to manage chronic pain and other health problems. He said he would hate to lose that ability to federal politics.

Mercauto is also one of thousands of Mainers who helped give Trump his sole New England electoral vote. Unlike most states, Maine splits its electoral votes by

congressional district, and Trump won the vast 2nd District, home to both New England conservatism and a marijuana culture.

Mercauto, who had his picture taken with Trump in 2016, said he is still a big fan of the president. But he believes the anti-pot move is bad for his state's economy and health.

"I believe it's going to take a hit at medical marijuana and the industry as a whole here in Maine," he said. "It's disappointing to see him take that stab at the industry. And I guarantee you all the tax money the state of Maine gets from medical marijuana really helps people all around."

Local governments won't say what they're offering Amazon

By JOSH CORNFIELD
Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — State and local governments have been more than happy to play up the amenities they think make their locations the best choice for Amazon's second headquarters. But many of them will not disclose the tax breaks or other financial incentives they are offering the online giant.

More than 15 states and cities, including Chicago, Cleveland and Las Vegas, refused requests from The Associated Press to detail the promises they made to try to lure the company.

Among the reasons given: Such information is a "trade secret" and disclosing it would put them at a competitive disadvantage.

"We want to be in the best possible position to negotiate. We don't want the whole world to know our strategy," Rhode Island Democratic Gov. Gina Raimondo said in a radio interview.

Amazon's search for a second headquarters city has triggered an unprecedented competition among governments around North America to attract a \$5 billion project that promises to create 50,000 jobs. The retailing behemoth has made clear that tax breaks and grants will be a big factor in its decision. It received 238 proposals and said it will announce a decision sometime this year.

Public records laws around the country vary, but when courting businesses, governments generally aren't required to disclose tax breaks and other incentives during the negotiating phase.

Open-government advocates, though, argue that Amazon is a special case because of the way it has turned the project



COURTESY OF THE CITY OF VIRGINIA BEACH, VA/AP

The City of Virginia Beach, Va., is using a sand sculpture to promote its application to become Amazon's second headquarters.

into a public auction, the large amount of taxpayer money at stake and the political clout the Seattle-based company could have in its new home.

"They're just acting like this is another secret deal," said Greg LeRoy, head of Good Jobs First, a nonprofit group that tracks economic development spending. "This is a nutty situation."

He said there are no grounds for hiding the information because no one is negotiating yet with Amazon.

"It's all paid for by taxpayer dollars," he said. "Therefore, it should all be public."

In recent months, Amazon suitors in Maine have cited New England's charm, skiing and beaches; Detroit has cited its rebounding downtown; and others have boasted of their labor forces or public transportation. Chicago recruited "Star Trek" actor William Shatner to help narrate a video pitch in hopes of getting the attention of Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos, a devoted Trekkie.

The AP asked for copies of the financial proposals from dozens of places trying to draw Amazon. The AP also sought invoices outlining how much public money was used to create the proposals and to promote them via public relations campaigns.

Some state and local governments have trumpeted the financial incentives they are dangling. New Jersey's pitch contains \$7 billion in tax breaks, a draft of Houston's plan calls for about \$268 million in inducements, and Boston's incentives include \$75 million for housing for Amazon employees.

But others — including Delaware, Georgia, Kansas, Nevada, Virginia and such cities as Detroit, Philadelphia, Orlando, Fla., Louisville, Ky., and Albuquerque, N.M. — won't say exactly what they're offering.

Chicago said releasing such information "could give an advantage to another applicant" and it turned over to the AP 82 pages of nondisclosure agreements. Charlotte, N.C., gave a similar explanation.

An Amazon spokesman declined to comment. Amazon said in its request for proposals in September that "certain aspects" of the project and details about the company "are confidential, proprietary and constitute trade secrets."

Many of the bids received by Amazon were submitted by outside groups such as regional economic development agencies

that are not typically required by public records laws to release such information.

More than 40 other requests from the AP for financial information produced no responses from government agencies or are still under consideration.

In Texas, for example, cities including Dallas, Houston and Austin responded to the AP's request by asking the state attorney general for an opinion on whether some of the financial details can be withheld for competitive reasons.

Kelley Shannon, executive director of the nonprofit Freedom of Information Foundation of Texas, lamented: "The people of our state can't really follow the money anymore. ... Taxpayers have a right to see how their money is being spent."

John Marion, executive director of the good-government group Common Cause Rhode Island, said it was disappointing that "Rhode Island didn't shoot for transparency."

"We don't necessarily want a company that can throw its weight around. So it would be interesting to know how that message was represented in the bid," he said.

According to records obtained by the AP, the costs associated with the proposals ranged from a few hundred dollars for copies to tens of thousands of dollars for promotional efforts.

In Philadelphia, an independent development agency overseeing the city's bid said it spent \$160,000 to develop and promote its proposal, including a website and a video. Worcester, Mass., released invoices showing that it spent more than \$10,500 on its proposal, most of it on a video. Virginia Beach, Va., spent \$3,000 to build a sand sculpture to promote its application.

NATION

Legislatures work on sexual harassment policies

By DAVID A. LIEB
Associated Press

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. — After a tumultuous few months that saw numerous lawmakers accused of sexual misconduct, a majority of state legislatures across the country are considering strengthening sexual harassment policies that have gone unheeded or unchanged for years.

A 50-state review by The Associated Press found that almost all legislative chambers now have at least some type of written sexual harassment policy, though they vary widely, and many are placing a greater emphasis on preventing and punishing sexual misconduct as they convene for their 2018 sessions.

This week alone, lawmakers in Arizona, Idaho and Rhode Island underwent detailed training about sexual harassment, some of the first time.

Yet about a third of all legislative

chambers do not require lawmakers to receive training about what constitutes sexual harassment, how to report it and what consequences it carries, the AP's review found.

The AP also found that only a minority of legislative bodies conduct external investigations into complaints, with most others entrusting lawmakers or staff to look into allegations against colleagues. That has contributed to a culture in some capitols in which the targets of sexual harassment have been reluctant to come forward with complaints — until recently.

Lawmakers around the country have said it's now time to take concrete steps to change that culture.

"Let's treat all women — regardless of their background, their age, their political affiliation, their role in the process — as ladies, as we would like anybody to treat our wives, our daughters, mothers, sisters," said J.D. Mesnard, the Republican who heads the Arizona

state House, where lawmakers took part in mandated sexual harassment training this week.

A wave of sexual misconduct claims against prominent figures in entertainment, media and politics gained momentum last fall after a multitude of women made allegations against movie producer Harvey Weinstein.

In the past year, at least 14 legislators in 10 states have resigned from office following accusations of sexual harassment or misconduct, according to the AP's review. At least 16 others in more than a dozen states have faced other repercussions, such as the voluntary or forced removal from legislative leadership positions. Some others remain defiant in the face of ongoing investigations into sexual harassment complaints.

The AP found that about three-fourths of the states have at least one legislative chamber that has updated its sexual harassment policy during the past several months,

developed specific proposals to do so or undertaken a review of whether changes are needed.

The Arizona House had no written sexual harassment policy until November, when Mesnard issued one after a female lawmaker accused a male colleague of sexually harassing her. In the weeks that followed, several other women came forward with stories of crude behavior by state Rep. Don Shooter.

On Tuesday, at the start of mandatory sexual harassment training, Shooter stood before colleagues and apologized for conduct he called "jarring, insensitive and demeaning." But he denied the most serious complaint — that he tried to pressure Rep. Michelle Ugenti-Rita into a sexual relationship.

Shooter, a Republican, has been removed as head of the appropriations committee as an investigation into his conduct continues.

Kevittsky, the acting House speaker has appointed a committee to devise a formal system to ad-

dress workplace complaints. That comes after former Speaker Jeff Howser resigned in leadership post following revelations that he had paid to keep a sexual harassment settlement secret.

Legislative chambers in Alaska, California, Colorado, Minnesota, Nevada and Ohio are among the states considering improved policies on sexual harassment, even in each case after sexual harassment claims were brought to light.

In Washington state, more than 40 lawmakers joined scores of other women in a letter last November calling for a change in the capitol culture. They wrote it has "too often functioned to serve and support harassers' power and privilege over protection of those who work for them."

A Senate panel subsequently approved annual training for senators and staff.

Other states that require sexual harassment training for lawmakers, the frequency varies greatly.

Study: Fla. monkeys might pose herpes risk

By JASON DEAREAN
Associated Press

ON THE SILVER RIVER, Fla. — Wildlife managers in Florida say they want to remove roaming monkeys from the state in light of a new study published Wednesday that finds some of the animals are excreting a virus that can be dangerous to humans.

Scientists studying a growing population of rhesus macaques in Silver Springs State Park say that rather than just carrying herpes B, which is common in the species, some of the monkeys have the virus in their saliva and other bodily fluids, posing a potential risk of spreading the disease.

Human cases of the virus have been rare, with about 50 documented worldwide, and there have been no known transmissions of it to people from wild rhesus macaques in Florida or elsewhere. However, the researchers say the issue has not been thoroughly studied.

The findings, published in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention journal *Emerging Infectious Diseases*, prompted the researchers from the universities of Florida and Washington to warn Florida's wildlife agency that the infected monkeys should be considered a public health concern.

State wildlife officials say they are taking the problem seriously.

"Without management action, the presence and continued expansion of non-native rhesus macaques in Florida can result in serious human health and safety risks, including human injury and transmission of disease," Thomas



JOHN RAOUX/AP

Rhesus macaque monkeys along the Silver River in Silver Springs, Fla., were the subject of a new study that finds some of the animals are excreting a virus that can be dangerous to humans.

Eason, assistant executive director of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, said in a statement.

Eason would not elaborate on what specific management tactics the state may employ, but a spokeswoman said the commission supports ridding the state of the invasive creatures.

The macaques, native to Asia, are one of Florida's many non-native wildlife species. Their contacts with the public, including last summer when the monkeys

chased a family, have made them somewhat notorious critters and have caused two partial park closures since 2016. The monkeys also have roamed far outside the park. Dozens were photographed recently swarming a deer feeder outside a home in Ocala. They have been spotted in trees in the Sarasota and Tallahassee areas.

The researchers estimate that up to 30 percent of the scores of Florida's feral macaques may be actively excreting the herpes B virus.

Coal baron's 'action plan' became policy initiatives for Trump

By MICHAEL BIESECKER
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — In the early days of the Trump administration, the head of one of America's largest coal companies sent a four-page "action plan" to the White House calling for rollbacks of Obama-era environmental and mine safety regulations.

"We have listed our suggested actions in order of priority," Robert "Bobby" Murray, the chairman and CEO of Ohio-based Murray Energy, wrote in his March 1 letter addressed to Vice President Mike Pence. "We are available to assist you and your administration in any way that you request."

A review of the memo by The Associated Press shows Murray, an early campaign supporter of President Donald Trump and major GOP political donor, has gotten about half the items on his wish list. They include pulling the United States out of the Paris climate accords and revoking the Clean Power Plan, former President Barack Obama's signature effort to limit planet-warming emissions from coal-fired power plants.

Murray has spoken widely about his policy priorities in the intervening months, but a copy of his four-page plan became public this week after it was obtained by Democratic Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse, of Rhode Island, and first reported by The New York Times.

Under Trump, the Mine Safety and Health Administration has also moved to reconsider rules meant to protect miners from breathing coal and rock dust — the primary cause of black lung — and diesel exhaust, which can cause cancer.

Other Murray priorities, such as eliminating federal tax credits for wind turbines and solar panels, have floundered, however. The renewable energy tax breaks were largely retained in the final Republican-drafted tax plan signed by Trump last month.

And despite Trump's campaign pledges to put scores of coal workers back to work by ending what he and Murray have derided as Obama's "War on Coal," the administration's regulatory rollback has thus far had modest economic benefits.

Only about 500 coal mining jobs were added in Trump's first year, bringing the total to about 50,900 nationally, according to the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics. The nation's utilities have also continued to shutter coal-fired plants in favor of those burning natural gas made cheaper and more abundant by new drilling technologies.

In an interview with the AP on Wednesday, Murray said Trump and his appointees have overall done a great job helping his industry, rating them "nearly 10" in the first year. He specifically credited Environmental Protection Administrator Scott Pruitt and Energy Secretary Rick Perry with being "stars."

Murray said he is still hopeful that Pruitt will follow through on the second-highest priority item on his 2017 action plan — revoking the EPA's 2009 finding that emitting greenhouse gases in the atmosphere threatens public health and welfare. The finding provided the legal underpinnings for Obama's efforts to regulate carbon emissions, as pollutants under the Clean Air Act.

WORLD

Christian church destroyed in China

By GERRY SHIH
Associated Press

BEIJING — Authorities in northern China's coal country this week demolished a well-known Christian mega-church, underscoring long-standing tensions between religious groups and the officially atheistic Communist Party.

Witnesses and overseas activists say paramilitary Police's Armed Police forces used excavators and dynamite on Tuesday to destroy the Golden Lampstand Church in the city of Linfen in Shanxi province.

ChinaAid, a U.S.-based Christian advocacy group, said local authorities planted explosives in an underground worship hall to demolish the building.

The church, with a congregation of more than 50,000, has long clashed with the government. Hundreds of police and hired thugs smashed the church and seized Bibles in an earlier crackdown in 2009 that ended with church leaders receiving long prison sentences.

There are an estimated 60 million Christians in China, many of whom worship in independent congregations like the Golden Lampstand.

The surging popularity of non-state-approved churches has raised the ire of local authorities, wary of any threats to the party's rigid political and social control. The church had previously been accused of violating land agreements and building codes — charges that are commonly brought against unregistered churches.

Millions of Christians, Buddhists and Muslims also worship in state-sanctioned assemblies.

An official at the local religious



In this image taken from video shot Tuesday, people stand amid the remains of the Golden Lampstand Church in Linfen, China. Witnesses and activists say paramilitary troops used excavators and dynamite to destroy the Christian mega-church.

affairs bureau denied Thursday that the demolition took place, but pictures distributed by ChinaAid showed the church's steeple and cross toppled in a large pile of rubble.

A local pastor at a nearby church, who spoke on condition of

anonymity, said he saw large numbers of paramilitary police blanketing the area Tuesday around the church, which was being taken apart by heavy machinery.

He later heard, but did not witness, a loud explosion, the pastor said.

8 earthquakes hit Iraq-Iran border

By AMIR VAHDAT
AND JON GAMBRELL
Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran — A series of eight earthquakes hit the Iran-Iraq border area and rattled Baghdad on Thursday, apparent aftershocks of a tremor that struck the mountainous region in November and killed more than 530 people. Four people suffered minor injuries in Iran, state television reported.

The U.S. Geological Survey said seven of the quakes struck near the Iraqi city of Mandali, 75 miles northeast of the Iraqi capital. Mandali is on the border between the two nations. The eighth hit near Mehran in western Iran, about 55 miles southeast of Mandali along the sparsely populated Zagros Mountains that divide Iran and Iraq.

All the earthquakes struck within an hour of each other, beginning at 6:59 Greenwich Mean Time. Six had a preliminary magnitude of at least 5, while two registered at magnitude 4. Scientists consider earthquakes of magnitude 5 as moderate.

Iranian authorities offered similar figures for the earthquakes on state television. All the information could change as scientists examine the data.

Iranian state television said online that people rushed into the streets as the tremors hit. In Baghdad, people felt a quake shake the Iraqi capital, followed by what felt like aftershocks.

All the earthquakes struck at a depth of 6 miles, according to the USGS. Earthquakes at magnitude 5 can cause considerable damage. The tremors also all were very shallow, which causes more ground shaking and potential damage, particularly in places without strict building codes.

In November, a major magnitude 7.3 earthquake struck the

same region, killing more than 530 people and injuring thousands in Iran alone. In Iraq, nine people were killed and 550 were injured, all in the country's northern Kurdish region, according to the United Nations.

Randy Baldwin, a geophysicist with the USGS' National Earthquake Information Center in Golden, Colo., said the earthquakes all appeared to be aftershocks from the November tremor.

That area is prone to many shallow faults, he said.

"It's ongoing activity there," Baldwin told The Associated Press. "If there was a stressed fault that's ready to move, they happen like that until the stresses are relieved, so it's not too unusual."

The November earthquake hit hardest in the Kurdish town of Sarpol-e-Zahab in the western Iranian province of Kermanshah, which is only 50 miles from where most of Thursday's earthquakes struck.

The region, largely rebuilt in recent decades after Iran and Iraq's ruinous 1980s war, saw many buildings collapse or sustain major damage in the November quake. While the Iranian government has offered loans for those affected to rebuild their homes, many still live in tents or temporary shipping containers-style homes and face the rains and cold of winter.

Iran sits on major fault lines and is prone to near-daily earthquakes. In 2003, a magnitude 6.6 quake flattened the historic city of Bam, killing 26,000 people.

Earlier on Thursday, the USGS said a magnitude 4.9 quake hit Iran's southern province of Kerman before dawn, while another magnitude 4.6 tremor struck Wednesday night in Kermanshah province. No injuries or damage were reported.

Shop in Paraguayan smuggling haven is closed after 'transgender' doll complaints

Associated Press

ASUNCION, Paraguay — Authorities in the Paraguayan border town of Ciudad del Este have temporarily closed a shop accused of selling transgender dolls.

Mayor Sandra McLeon justified Tuesday's closure by noting that the city, most widely known as a smuggling and counterfeiting haven, last year declared itself "pro-life and family."

City attorney Christian Cabral said the shop also was closed for failing to pay this year's commercial tax and for selling toys when it's only authorized to sell electronic goods.

The dolls had caused a local

media stir after some customers complained.

They appear to be standard, old-fashioned baby dolls with a red ribbon around the head, but with male genitalia.

Shop manager Esther Bazan told local reporters that the dolls came from China and said tourists from neighboring Brazil and Argentina had found them funny, but other customers were upset.

Paraguay last year banned educational material about sexual diversity in schools, and the education minister volunteered to help burn all books related to the subject.

"We're not going to promote gender ideology," Education

Minister Enrique Riera told local media last year.

"We're going to base ourselves on what is expressed in the constitution, which says that marriage is between a man and a woman."

Ciudad del Este, on the border with Argentina and Brazil, is a haven for shoppers from all three countries.

It has been accused by U.S. and international officials of being a center of drug and counterfeit-goods smuggling.

The U.S. Treasury Department in the past has alleged that some of that smuggling helped finance Middle Eastern terrorist networks.



EVER PORTILLO/AP

Officials closed a shop Tuesday in Ciudad del Este, Paraguay, for a variety of reasons, including the sale of this doll held by Danna Rios.

WORLD



PROVIDED BY JOSHUA DASKIN/AP

A hippopotamus charges into the waters of Lake Urena in Gorongosa National Park, Mozambique, in 2014. Gorongosa's hippos and other wildlife were devastated by civil war in the 1980s and '90s.

Study: African elephant, hippo, rhino populations shrink during wartime

By SETH BORENSTEIN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — War is hell for wildlife, too. A new study finds that wartime is the biggest threat to Africa's elephants, rhinos, hippos and other large animals.

The researchers analyzed how decades of conflict in Africa have affected populations of large animals. More than 70 percent of Africa's protected wildlife areas fell inside a war zone at some point since 1946, many of them repeatedly, they found. The more often the war, the steeper the drop in the mammal population, said Yale University ecologist Josh Daskin, lead author of a study in Wednesday's *Journal Nature*.

"It takes very little conflict, as much as one conflict in about 20 years, for the average wildlife population to be declining," Daskin said.

The areas with the most frequent battles — not necessarily the bloodiest — lose 35 percent of

their mammal populations each year there's fighting, he said.

Although some animals are killed in the crossfire or by land mines, war primarily changes social and economic conditions in a way that make it tough on animals, said study co-author Rob Pringle, an ecologist at Princeton University.

People in and near war zones are poorer and hungrier. So they poach more often for valuable tusks or hunt protected animals to eat, Pringle said. Conservation programs don't have much money, power or even the ability to protect animals during war time, Pringle said.

Most of the time, some animals do survive wars. Researchers found animal populations completely wiped out in only six instances — including a large group of giraffes in a Ugandan park between 1983 and 1995 during two civil wars.

Other studies have looked at individual war zones and found ani-

mal populations that shrink and others that grow. For example, the demilitarized zone between North and South Korea is great for wildlife because it has "acted almost as a de facto park for almost seven decades," Daskin said.

The new study covered the entire continent over 65 years. The researchers looked at 10 different factors that could change population numbers, including war, drought, animal size, protected areas and human population density.

The number of wars had the biggest effect on population while the intensity of the wars — measured in human deaths — had the least.

By looking at the big picture, the research supports what many experts figured — that "war is a major driver of wildlife population declines across Africa," said Kaitlyn Gaynor, an ecology researcher on war and wildlife at the University of California, Berkeley. She was not part of the study.

N. Korea: Book's popularity points to Trump's end

By HYUNG-JIN KIM
Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korea has found good material to attack President Donald Trump: Michael Wolff's bombshell new book, "Fire and Fury: Inside the Trump White House."

The book paints Trump as a leader who doesn't understand the weight of his office and whose competence is questioned by aides. Trump and other White House aides have blasted it as inaccurate trash. But it was the top-selling book in the U.S. last week, and its numbers are likely to grow far higher.

On Thursday, the North's main Rodong Sinmun newspaper, run by its ruling Workers' Party, carried an article about the book's subject matter, how Trump reacted and why it is selling so well.

Its sales reflect "rapidly surging anti-Trump sentiments in the international community," the article said. "The anti-Trump book is sweeping all over the world so Trump is being massively humiliated worldwide."

The book's popularity "foretells Trump's political demise," the article said.

Last summer, Trump threatened North Korea with "fire and fury like the world has never seen" in an exchange of taunts with the North, which claimed it was examining plans to launch missiles toward the American territory of Guam.

Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un have since traded threats of war and crude insults as the North conducted tests of nuclear weapons and long-range missiles.

Trump, 71, called Kim "Rock-

et Man" on a "suicide mission." Kim called the American president "the mentally deranged U.S. dotard." In his New Year's address last week, Kim said he has a "nuclear button" that could fire weapons anywhere in the U.S., and Trump responded that he has a much bigger and more powerful "nuclear button."

Recently, North Korea has taken steps toward improving ties with rival South Korea in what critics call a tactic to divide Seoul and Washington and to weaken U.S.-led international pressure and sanctions on the country. On Tuesday, it had its first formal talks with South Korea in about two years and agreed to send a delegation to next month's Winter Olympics in the South and to hold military talks aimed at easing front-line animosity.

But North Korea hasn't stopped its rhetoric against Trump. Last week, the North's state media called Trump a "war maniac" and "madman."

After Tuesday's inter-Korean talks, Trump said during a phone conversation with South Korean President Moon Jae-in that the U.S. was open to talks with North Korea "at the appropriate time, under the right circumstances," according to a White House statement.

"Fire and Fury" was released Jan. 5 and sold 29,000 copies through the next day, NPD BookScan told The Associated Press. Digital sales already top 250,000 and audio sales exceed 100,000, according to John Sargent, CEO of Macmillan, the parent company of the book's publisher, Henry Holt and Co. It has raised an initial announced printing of 150,000 to more than 1 million.

Police hunt for jewels, thieves after Ritz Hotel robbery in Paris

By ANGELA CHARLTON
Associated Press

PARIS — Paris police have recovered some jewels stolen from the Ritz Hotel in a dramatic heist, but are still searching Thursday for two thieves and the rest of the missing luxury merchandise.

The robbery on Wednesday evening raised questions about security in one of the world's most prestigious neighborhoods, the Place Vendôme, whose well-guarded buildings include the Justice Ministry, high-end boutiques and the 19th-century Ritz.

Workers cleaned up shattered glass Thursday morning and started to repair damage from the robbery. Otherwise, business appeared to be returning to normal at the Ritz, with no significant

increase in security.

Three suspects entered the hotel through an unmarked side door, smashed display cases and threw bags of goods out a window to at least two accomplices outside, according to a police official.

The three inside then were blocked when they tried to flee through another door and soon were arrested, the official said.

The accomplices outside fled, one on a motorcycle and another in a car. The motorcyclist dropped a bag with jewels and hatchets when his motorcycle hit a pedestrian during his escape, the official said. The pedestrian was lightly injured, said the official, who was not authorized to speak publicly about an ongoing investigation.

Other jewels were found scattered amid the debris of the shattered display cases during overnight cleanup efforts, the official told The Associated Press.

The overall value of the jewels on display was about \$5.4 million, and authorities were working Thursday with the jewelers to determine how many items are still missing and their value, the official said.

Another police official said some of the thieves apparently had guns. Two people inside the hotel hid from the thieves and alerted police, the official said.

Patrons at the hotel's renowned Hemingway Bar described panic as the thieves entered the hushed environment of the Ritz, where rooms start at \$1,200 per night.



CLEMENT LAMOT/AP

In this image made from video, French police respond Wednesday evening outside the Ritz Hotel in Paris after a robbery.



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WIRED WORLD

Behind the gadgets, Amazon, Google at war

BY RYAN NAKASHIMA
AND MATT O'BRIEN
Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — The flash of the CES technology show in Las Vegas is all about robots, drones and smart gadgets. But its subtext is all about Google versus Amazon.

Both companies usually shun conventions like CES, preferring to debut gadgets at their own press events. But these tech giants have built an imposing presence here this year as they work to weave their voice-operated digital assistants more deeply into our personal lives.

Google has plastered digital billboards and the Las Vegas Monorail with the "Hey Google" wake-up command. It's announced a range of new gadgets featuring its assistant on everything from smart displays to pressure cookers. And it's sent out the clowns — a jumpsuit-wearing army of advertising associates wearing brightly colored Converse sneakers and hovering around partner firms' booths to explain how Google's technology works.

Amazon, which grabbed an early lead in this market, opted for a more subtle approach. Instead of an advertising blitz, its Alexa digital assistant merely has been popping up regularly in "smart" products across the convention — everything from mirrors and toilets to headphones and car dashboards.

Executives from both companies also have been turning up at news conferences

held by other companies such as Panasonic, LG and Toyota. "What we're seeing is heavy competition between all the personal assistants," said Gartner analyst Brian Blau.

The stakes

The two companies — and to a lesser extent, Apple, with Siri, and Microsoft, with Cortana — are waging a fierce struggle to establish their assistants as de facto standards for a new generation of voice-controlled devices. It's similar in some respects to the decade-old battle between the iPhone and Google's Android system in smartphones, or to the much older fight between Apple's Mac computers and Microsoft's Windows PCs.

Both companies see the competition in existential terms. Getting shut out of voice devices could imperil Google's lucrative digital advertising business, the source of its financial strength. Amazon, meanwhile, wants to ensure that its customers can directly access its "everything store" in contrast to now, when they mostly shop via devices and software systems controlled by Amazon's rivals.

For consumers, meanwhile, the spread of these assistants offers new convenience in the form of an ever-present digital concierge. But there also could be some uneasiness about revealing even more about their habits, preferences and routines to distant computers that are always listening for their commands.

The ever-present computer

In a video presentation by LG, one consumer cooks while reading a recipe from the smart screen of the company's voice-activated robot CLOI. Another prepares to embark on a vacation and shuts off her lights by saying, "Hey, Google, I'm leaving."

Google said this week it's integrating its voice assistant to allow remote control of some settings in Kia and Fiat Chrysler vehicles, while Toyota announced a similar arrangement with Amazon that enables drivers to ask Alexa to turn the heat up at home before they arrive.

But these smart products can — and sometimes do — support multiple assistants. Toyota Connected CEO Zack Hicks told reporters that "we're not exclusive" with Amazon, and that nothing prevents Toyota from partnering with others.

General Electric is showing off a suite of smart kitchen gizmos that connect its "Geneva" voice assistant to those of Amazon and Google. For example, you can preheat your oven by saying, "Alexa, tell Geneva to preheat the upper oven to 350." China's Baidu on Monday announced it was integrating its voice assistant into a lamp speaker and dome ceiling lights.

Whether people truly will pay more for the ability not to walk over and flip a switch is unclear. But manufacturers aren't taking the chance that they'll be left behind if one or the other assistant be-

comes dominant.

"Five years ago, no one could predict what was going to happen with the smart home," said LG Electronics USA marketing vice president David VanderWaal. "Five years from now, we're not quite sure either. So this open-partner, open-platform system is definitely the way to go."

The runners up

For the moment, voice competitors to Amazon and Google remain largely in the wings.

Microsoft's Cortana assistant, which is available on PCs running Windows 10, allows hundreds of millions of users to search the web using Bing. But it hasn't been a huge factor in gadget announcements leading up to CES. In fact, Alexa is even starting to encroach on Cortana's turf by making its way onto some PCs.

Apple hasn't been prominent this year, either. But many manufacturers have adopted its HomeKit software in order to ensure they'll work easily with iPhones and Siri. Apple, however, had to push back release of the HomePod, its almost \$350 smart speaker, until "early" this year; it originally was scheduled for December 2017.

Some analysts also say it's too soon to rule out Bixby, Samsung's AI assistant, which the company vowed to make a more central part of all its connected devices by 2020.

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STARS AND STRIPES

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Burst pipe damages historic tavern

VA ALEXANDRIA — A historic tavern building in Virginia dating to the 18th century has suffered damage connected to recent frigid temperatures.

The city of Alexandria said it is temporarily closing Gadsby's Tavern Museum in the city's Old Town section.

City officials said a sprinkler pipe burst Sunday evening. That led to flooding from the second floor to the basement in the museum building, which was built around 1785.

The museum will be closed for at least two weeks.

Gadsby's was a social hub for the city in the era of the Founding Fathers. George Washington was a frequent patron, and each of the first five presidents visited the tavern.

Ice falls from building and crushes man's car

NY NEW YORK — An 18-year-old man said he was walking toward his car when a large chunk of ice and snow fell off a 21-story New York City building and crushed his car.

The New York Police Department briefly shut down the SoHo neighborhood street after the ice crumpled the back of the car Tuesday afternoon. Coltrane Nadler, of South Orange, N.J., said he can laugh about the incident because no one was injured.

Nadler said that although the streets were parked bumper to bumper, his vehicle was the only one hit.

Police: Plow driver drunk when he hit 2 cars

NJ PEQUANNOCK — Authorities said a state Department of Transportation worker was driving drunk when the snowplow he was operating struck two vehicles.

Pequanock police said Roger Attieh, 36, of Boonton, sideswiped a vehicle around 5:40 p.m. Monday.

After inspecting the damage, they said, Attieh began to drive away but then rear-ended a second vehicle.

Attieh is charged with drunken driving and drunken driving in a commercial motor vehicle.

850 'cold-stunned' turtles are retrieved

FL FORT WALTON BEACH — Officials said more than 850 "cold-stunned" sea turtles have been brought to a Florida facility since a cold snap began last week.

Gulf World Marine Institute spokeswoman Sam Tuno told the Northwest Florida Daily News that it's the second-largest cold-stunning event in the Florida Panhandle since 2010, when approximately 1,800 sea turtles were rehabilitated.

Sea turtles' bodies can go into shock when the waters get below 50 degrees in shallow bays and estuaries.



ALAN WARREN, THE (OWENSBORO, Ky.) MESSENGER-INQUIRER/AP

Singing her heart out

Kindergarteners Kionah Green, front, Carter Pointer, left, and Braxton Mattingly, top right, sing along with the band Lindsay Lou and the Flatbellys as they play bluesgrass music during the International Bluesgrass Music Museum's Bluesgrass in the Schools program at Burns Elementary School in Owensboro, Ky., on Tuesday.

Tuno said they're expecting to lose up to 10 percent of the turtles, but the majority of them will be fine.

Theft suspect nabbed applying for police job

AZ PHOENIX — A former Bank of America worker suspected of theft chose the wrong employer when applying for a police dispatch job.

The Cottonwood Police Department in central Arizona's Yavapai County said the case involving Alberto Lopez, 32, of Phoenix popped up in law enforcement records when he applied to be a dispatcher.

Police spokeswoman Sgt. Monica Kuhl said Monday that Lopez was suspected of stealing \$5,000 from a Bank of America branch in Yavapai County between July and September 2016.

After Lopez applied for the dispatch position, officers had him come in for an interview last week and arrested him on a felony theft warrant.

He didn't get the job.

Seized white tiger sent to California sanctuary

LA BATON ROUGE — A California sanctuary for exotic animals is caring for a white tiger cub that was seized in

Louisiana.

Director Bobbi Brink told The New Orleans Advocate the 5-month-old animal was malnourished, lethargic and had ringworm when it arrived Dec. 22.

She and Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries permits director Melissa Collins said a current investigation keeps them from saying who owned it.

Brink said the cub's now doing well.

It's at Lions, Tigers & Bears, a Big Cat and Exotic Animal Rescue in Alpine, Calif.

It's illegal for Louisiana residents to own tigers or other exotic animals.

THE CENSUS



Courtesy of U.S. Customs and Border Protection

400

The number of pairs of counterfeit Air Jordan shoes customs officers seized at Dulles International Airport in Virginia on Monday. The shoes, valued at \$55,000, arrived last month and were destined for an address in Alexandria, Va. Officers said the shoes arrived from China.

Suspect steals money, cookies from Subway

NV LAS VEGAS — Las Vegas police are researching for a suspect who robbed a Subway restaurant of \$69 and two macadamia nut cookies.

KSNV-TV reported that surveillance footage shows the suspect pull out a gun before pointing it at a Subway employee Jan. 4.

The employee, Eric Rouse, said the man ordered the two cookies and then pulled out the gun and made demands.

2 fires blamed on heating of frozen pipes

MD TANEYTOWN — Fire officials in Maryland blamed two fires on people trying to thaw frozen pipes.

FOX 45 in Baltimore reported that one fire occurred last weekend in Taneytown. No injuries were reported.

The Maryland Fire Marshal's Office attributed the cause of the blaze to the use of a blowtorch to heat snow pipes.

The Fire Marshal's Office said another fire started under similar circumstances the same day in Edgewood.

Officials said a maintenance worker used a heat gun and a hair dryer to thaw pipes in a town house.

Police: Woman shot at husband on the toilet

AZ GOODYEAR — An Arizona woman is facing charges after police said she fired shots at her husband while he sat on the toilet to make him "listen."

KNXV-TV reported Linda Jean Fahn, 69, recently was arrested following a frantic call from her husband.

He told Goodyear police Fahn barged in while he was using the restroom and fired two shots above his head.

According to a police report, Fahn told officers, "I shot two bullets at the wall above his head to make him listen to me."

Fahn has been charged with aggravated assault.

From wire reports

INDEPENDENT NEWS FOR THE U.S. MILITARY COMMUNITY

Whenever They Fight and Wherever They Live

The first Stars and Stripes was printed during the Civil War, when a band of Union soldiers published a handful of editions.

During World War I, Stars and Stripes reappeared in Paris on February 8, 1918, to serve the doughboys of the American Expeditionary Force (AEF), by order of General of the Armies John J. Pershing. An all-military staff produced it weekly until the war's end.

A second renaissance began on April 18, 1942, when a small group of servicemen began publishing a four-page weekly Stars and Stripes in London. They sold each copy for "tuppence" (about 5 cents) and in no time doubled their page count to eight pages, printing daily instead of weekly.

The first World War II edition of Stars and Stripes featured an interview with Gen. George C. Marshall, Army Chief of Staff. Marshall quoted Gen. Pershing, World War I Commander of the AEF, who described Stripes as a major factor in sustaining morale. Stars and Stripes later found a champion and protector in Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, Supreme Allied Commander and later president of the United States.

Eisenhower enforced a hands-off policy in regard to Stars and Stripes that continues to the present day.

Operations expanded, following GIs to the battlefield to bring them the news. During the war, Stars and Stripes published over 30

separate editions, running up to 24 pages per issue.

At one time, Stars and Stripes had some 25 printing locations in Europe, North Africa, the Middle East and the Pacific. The Pacific edition was launched a week after VE day (Victory in Europe, May 8, 1945).

The war ended—but Stars and Stripes kept going. Its reporters and photographers continued to join American troops in the field, throughout the Korean and Vietnam conflicts, during the 1990s Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, and in Bosnia and Kosovo.

From the 2003 outset of Operation Enduring Freedom, Stars and Stripes was there to report first-hand. The war in Afghanistan continues to receive steady coverage. And during Operation Iraqi Freedom, Stripes reporters embedded with military units in Kuwait and Iraq, as well as on Navy ships in the region.

Stars and Stripes today is a multimedia news organization. The majority of Stars and Stripes unique reporting efforts is read now in digital form, either online at stripes.com or via mobile offerings for iPhone, Android and iPad, in over 200 countries around the world.

The print newspaper is still available for servicemembers, government civilians and their families in

Europe, the Middle East and the Pacific—and in contingency areas. Washington, D.C., hosts the Central office, where daily editions are transmitted to printers in Afghanistan, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, and Djibouti, as well as in Germany, Italy, UK, Japan, and South Korea. Stars and Stripes also publishes several weeklies (Stripes Guam, Japan, Korea and Okinawa), designed to serve the

needs of their respective military communities.

A U.S. edition comprised exclusively of Stars and Stripes reports from around the world now serves stateside forces and veterans. The U.S. edition is published in partnership with commercial newspaper publishers who serve communities with large military populations.



STARS AND STRIPES RECOGNIZED FOR EXCELLENCE

2015 Columbia Journalism School Dart Awards

Feature Story Reporting
(Daily Circulation 1,500,000)
Finalist: Martin Kuz: "Army Sgt. Isaac Sims left the war in Iraq, but it didn't leave him"

2014 Sigma Delta Chi Award – Feature Story Reporting

(Daily Circulation 1,500,000)
Recipient: Martin Kuz: "Death shapes life for teens that prepare bodies of fallen troops for final flight home"

2014 VFW News Media Award

For outstanding contribution to a better understanding of our American way of life and its institutions and interests by honest and forthright reporting.

2013 Military Reporters and Editors Awards

Notable Narrative Winner
Recipient: Laura Rauch

2013 Best American Newspaper Narrative Writing Contest

Notable Narrative Winner
Recipient: Martin Kuz: "Soldiers Recount Attack"

2011 Military Photographer of the Year

Honorable Mention
Recipient: Joshua DeMott

2011 Sigma Delta Chi Award

Breaking News Photography
(Newspaper Circulation 100,001+ or Affiliated Website/National Magazine) Recipient: Laura Rauch: "For those I love I will sacrifice"

2011 John Reagan "Tex" McCrary Award for Excellence in Journalism

Congressional Medal of Honor Foundation

2010 Military Reporters and Editors Awards

Overseas coverage
(< 100,000 circulation)
Recipient: Jon Rabirow

2010 National Headliner Awards

First Place: Public Service (Forcing Change) – Third Place: News Series (Coming Home: The Men of Triple Deuce)

2009 George Polk Awards in Journalism

George Polk Award for Military Reporting
Recipients: Charles Reed, Leo Shane III and Kevin Baron

2007 Military Reporters and Editors Awards

Overseas coverage (< 100,000 circulation)
Recipient: Monte Morin

2006 Military Reporters and Editors Awards

Overseas coverage
(< 100,000 circulation)
Recipients: Monte Morin, Joe Giordano; Honorable mention: Nancy Montgomery Photography; Fred Zimmerman

2005 Military Reporters and Editors Awards

Overseas coverage
(< 100,000 circulation)
Recipient: Steve Lewis Photography; Terry Boyd

2004 American Legion Excellence in Journalism Award

Ground Truth Series

2003 Scripps Howard Foundation National Journalism Award

First Amendment, Finalist

BUSINESS/WEATHER

New plant drives Ala. bid to become auto hub

By Kim Chandler
And Tom Krisher
Associated Press

MONTGOMERY, Ala. — Alabama, seeking the fast lane in its bid to become a major auto making hub in the South, has landed a coveted \$1.6 billion joint venture plant by Japanese car giants Toyota and Mazda that will eventually employ 4,000 people.

The new plant is to be located in Huntsville, Ala. — already a hub for the region's budding aerospace industry — and will produce 300,000 vehicles per year, a combination of the Toyota Corolla compact car and a new small crossover SUV from Mazda. Production is targeted to begin by 2021.

"This is indeed a great day in Alabama," Gov. Kay Ivey said Wednesday, flanked by company executives at a news conference in the state capital, Montgomery. Alabama offered an incentive package worth more than \$379 million to lure the plant.

Toyota and Mazda will join Mercedes, Honda and Hyundai, which currently operate assembly plants in Alabama.

Alabama was already tied with Tennessee as the fifth-largest producer of vehicles in the U.S. last year, according to the Center



ALBERT CESARE, THE MONTGOMERY (ALA.) ADVERTISER/AP

Akio Toyota, Toyota Motor Corp. president, speaks during a press conference Wednesday in Montgomery, Ala., where Japanese automakers Toyota and Mazda announced plans to build a \$1.6 billion plant in Huntsville.

for Automotive Research, an industry think tank in Ann Arbor, Michigan. The state produced 9 percent of the cars made in the country, the center said.

President Donald Trump congratulated the state on Twitter Wednesday evening in a post that said: "Good news: Toyota and Mazda announce giant new

Huntsville, Alabama, plant which will produce over 300,000 cars and SUV's a year and employ 4000 people. Companies are coming back to the U.S. in a very big way. Congratulations Alabama!"

Alabama started on the road to becoming an auto manufacturing hub in 1993 when Mercedes chose it as the location for a manufacturing plant after the state offered a then-eye popping \$250 million incentive package.

Akio Toyota, president of Toyota Motors, said Wednesday that the new facility is something of a homecoming since the company already has one plant in the state. The new Huntsville plant will be just 14 miles from Toyota Motor Manufacturing of Alabama, which produces four-cylinder, V-6 and V-8 engines for several Toyota models.

"Alabama was a first-place trophy today in being selected for that plant," said Dave Sullivan, product analysis manager at AutPacific Inc., an automotive research company. Sullivan said the factory itself is a huge asset for the state, but will also cause economic ripples by bringing spin-off jobs to suppliers and service companies in the area.

The decision to pick Alabama is another example of a long trend of foreign-based automakers build-

ing U.S. factories in the South. To entice manufacturers, Southern states have used a combination of lucrative incentive packages, low-cost labor and a pro-business labor environment since the United Auto Workers union is stronger in Northern states.

To lure the plant, Alabama offered an incentive package of \$379 million in tax abatements, investment rebates and the construction of a worker training facility. The total price tag could top \$400 million when road projects and local incentives are added.

Alabama Commerce Secretary Greg Canfield said he believed the state is getting a "pretty good deal" considering the plant will create \$5.2 billion over 20 years.

"Not only that, it's really hard to measure the positive impact that having companies create career opportunities like this and how that transforms families," Canfield said.

The announcement comes at a time that U.S. sales of small cars fell nearly 10 percent last year as buyers continued a massive shift toward SUVs and pickup trucks. Corolla sales fell 14 percent for the year, to just less than 309,000, according to Autodata Corp.

Still, Toyota and Mazda have said their collaboration will respect mutual independence and

equality. Toyota, which makes the Prius hybrid, Camry sedan and Lexus luxury models, already provides hybrid technology to Mazda, which makes compact cars for Toyota at its Mexico plant.

The sheer cost of the plant also makes a partnership logical, as it boosts cost-efficiency and economies of scale. Working together on green and other auto technology also makes sense as the segment becomes increasingly competitive because of concerns about global warming, the environment and safety.

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates	
Euro costs (Jan. 12)	\$1.2349
Dollar buys (Jan. 12)	€0.8998
British pound (Jan. 12)	\$1.39
Japanese yen (Jan. 12)	109.86
South Korean won (Jan. 12)	1,044.00
Commercial rates	
Bahrain (Dinar)	0.3770
British pound	\$1.3535
Canada (Dollar)	1.2549
China (Yuan)	6.4969
Denmark (Krone)	6.1839
Egypt (Pound)	17.7114
Euro	\$1.2043/0.8033
Hong Kong (Dollar)	7.8229
Hungary (Forint)	256.79
India (Shekel)	3.4192
Japan (Yen)	111.53
Kuwait (Dinar)	0.3016
Norway (Krone)	8.0303
Philippines (Peso)	50.37
Poland (Zloty)	3.47
Saudi (Riyal)	3.7598
Singapore (Dollar)	1.3309
South Korea (Won)	1,065.76
Taiwan (Dollar)	0.9744
Thailand (Baht)	32.01
Turkey (Lira)	3.7882

(Military exchange rates are those available to customers at military banking facilities in the country of issue. For Japan, South Korea, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, nonlocal currency exchange rates (i.e., purchasing British pounds in Germany), check with your local military banking facility. Commercial rates are interbank rates provided for reference when buying currency. All figures are foreign currencies to one dollar, except for the British pound, which is represented in dollars-to-pound, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.)

INTEREST RATES

Prime rate	4.50
Discount rate	2.00
Federal funds market rate	4.25
3-month bill	1.42
30-year bond	2.90

MARKET WATCH

	Jan. 10, 2018
Dow Jones	-16.67
Industrials	25,369.13
Nasdaq	-10.01
composite	7,153.57
Standard & Poor's 500	-3.06
	2,748.23
Russell	-0.30
2000	1,559.80

PACIFIC GAS PRICES

Country	Unleaded	Super unleaded	Super plus	Diesel
Japan	—	\$3.069	—	\$3.029
Change in price	—	No change	—	+2.0 cents
Okinawa	\$2.559	—	—	\$3.029
Change in price	+1.0 cents	—	—	+2.0 cents
South Korea	\$2.589	\$2.869	\$3.109	\$3.069
Change in price	No change	+1.0 cents	+3.0 cents	—
Guam	\$2.589**	\$2.869	\$3.109	—
Change in price	No change	+1.0 cents	—	—

* Diesel EFD ** Midgrade
For the week of Jan. 13-19

EUROPE GAS PRICES

Country	Super E10	Super unleaded	Super plus	Diesel
Germany	\$2.811	\$3.091	\$3.329	\$3.285
Change in price	+0.2 cents	+0.4 cents	+0.5 cents	+2.3 cents
Netherlands	—	\$3.534	\$3.674	\$3.681
Change in price	—	+0.5 cents	+0.5 cents	+3.0 cents
U.K.	—	\$3.036	\$3.274	\$3.230
Change in price	—	+0.4 cents	+0.5 cents	+2.3 cents
Azores	—	—	\$3.272	—
Change in price	—	—	+0.5 cents	—
Belgium	—	\$2.627	\$2.873	\$2.939
Change in price	—	No change	No change	No change
Turkey	—	—	\$3.150	\$3.106*
Change in price	—	—	+0.5 cents	+2.3 cents
Italy	\$3.860	—	—	\$3.822
Change in price	No change	—	—	No change

WEATHER OUTLOOK

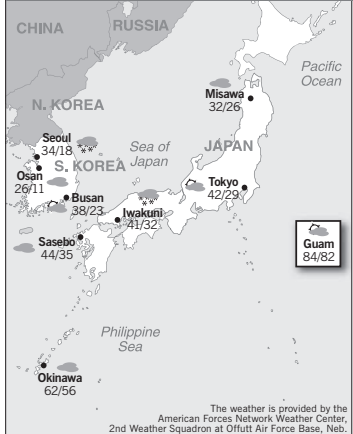
FRIDAY IN THE MIDDLE EAST



FRIDAY IN EUROPE



SATURDAY IN THE PACIFIC



The weather is provided by the American Forces Network Weather Center, 2nd Weather Squadron at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb.

WEEKEND



Charli XCX does it her way on 'Pop 2'

Page 37



Standing out from the crowd

Tom Hanks is a typewriter collector and an avid history buff. The prolific actor steps into one of the most dramatic stories in American journalism in Steven Spielberg's period drama 'The Post.' The film goes beyond the Pentagon Papers tale to speak to the role of journalism in politics today.

Pages 24-25



WEEKEND: GADGETS & CHARTS



The addictive nature of video gaming has been a matter of conjecture, and the World Health Organization will make it official when it adds "gaming disorder" to its disease list this year.

'Gaming disorder' will be officially labeled a disease

By MIKE TIGHE
Chicago Tribune

It was only a matter of time before health officials diagnosed video game characters such as Mario and Super Mario as addictive, as the World Health Organization basically will do when it adds "gaming disorder" to its disease list this year.

The decision is cause for celebration in mental-health circles, with therapist Jeff Reiland saying, "I'm excited about it — not that I'm looking for more labels. ... We've been dancing around this for a decade."

The addictive nature of video gaming has been a matter of conjecture, and the WHO designation affirms it as a mental-health issue, said Reiland, a child and family therapist at Gunderson Health System in La Crosse, Wis., who also teaches a class on addictive behaviors at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse.

His students have been studying the issue of video games' addictiveness for six years, Reiland said.

The draft of WHO's 11th update of its International Classification of Diseases defines gaming disorder as "a pattern of persistent or recurrent gaming behavior ('digital gaming' or 'video-gaming'),

which may be online (i.e., over the internet) or offline."

Indications of the disorder that WHO lists include:

- Impaired control over gaming, such as frequency, intensity and ability to quit.
- Giving increasing attention to gaming to the extent that it takes precedence over other interests and daily activities.

• And "continuation or escalation of gaming despite the occurrence of negative consequences."

The specification of video gaming as a disorder is expected to prompt insurance companies to cover it in their health plans, an industry observer said.

"The message here really is that the brain is affected by video gaming" in a fashion similar to that of alcohol and other drugs," Reiland said. "It is the same neurons, the same nerves ... the same rush for gambling or reaching the next level of a video game," he said. "This is not to say all video gaming is addictive, but its target is younger people with developing brains," he said.

Preoccupation with video games and playing them virtually non-stop short-circuits young brains' ability to develop problem-solving and coping skills, as well as strategies to navigate through life, Reiland said.

ON THE COVER: "The Post," starring Tom Hanks and Meryl Streep, details The Washington Post's handling of the Pentagon Papers.

Twentieth Century Fox

GADGET WATCH

Portable turntable takes users back in time

By GREGG ELLMAN
Tribune News Service

When you see the unopened Crosley Nomad portable turntable, you could easily think like I did that it's a throwback briefcase, like my dad used to carry to work. But once it's opened, you'll see there's a good reason to take your old records off the shelf, give them a dusting and get them spinning on this self-contained vinyl player.

Even if you're new to the vinyl resurgence world, using a turntable is simple. After you unpack it, there's really not a lot of setup; it takes just a few minutes. Assuming you have some 33 $\frac{1}{3}$, 45 or 78 RPM records, you're set for some great listening with the three-speed turntable. An adapter is included for 45s.

A diamond stylus needle is included with the belt-driven turntable, which has built-in dynamic full-range stereo speakers (one on each side) for great sound on the AC-powered system. Or you can connect it to external speakers and systems with the RCA audio out port. For private listening, just plug your headphones into the headphone port.

A USB connection lets it connect to Mac and Windows computer systems for turning your vinyl into digital audio files with the included software.

The portability (13-by-17-by-4 inches, 10.5 pounds) makes it simple to move from room to room or even take on a trip. Either way, the Nomad is a great choice if you're looking to either re-live or join the vinyl listening world.

Online: crosleyradio.com; \$199.95, replacement NPS Audio Technica needles are \$14.95

IFrogz has expanded its versatile wireless audio lineup with five new affordable products, all with Bluetooth 4.1 technology.

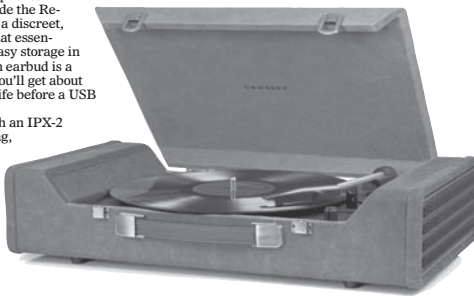
They include three in-ear earbuds and a pair of over-the-ear headphones.

The earbuds include the Resound (\$29.99), with a discreet, low-profile design that essentially winds up for easy storage in a pocket. Inside each earbud is a 5.5mm driver, and you'll get about 10 hours of battery life before a USB charge is needed.

They are built with an IPX-2 water-resistant rating, which is great for sweaty workouts.

The Crosley Nomad portable turntable is easy to move within the home, or even take on a trip.

CROSLLEY/TNS



A built-in mic is perfect for hands-free calls, and Qualcomm cVc noise-cancellation technology is perfect for keeping outside noise from your conversations and amplifies your voice for the one listening.

A magnetic clip is on the controls for keeping it in place. Other controls include volume, play/pause and answering calls.

The other earbuds are the Flex Force (\$29.99) and Free Rein (\$19.99) earbuds.

The Flex Force has a comfortable neck back with the earbuds attached to a lightweight wire on each side. Each speaker has an 8mm driver; you'll get about eight hours of battery life before charging.

Each earbud has a magnetic tip to keep them in place when they aren't being used.

The Free Rein earbuds are built with wing tips for a secure fit. They have 10mm drivers and five hours of battery life. A flat cable connects the earbuds to the control knob and keeps it tangle and knot free.

Both the Flex Force and the Res Rein also has controls for calls, audio and music selections.

If you want over-the-ear with an ergonomic fit, the Resound (\$34.99) and Toxix (\$24.99) headphones both have adjustable flexible headbands, comfortable foam-layered ear cups and IPX2 sweat-resistance construction.

The Resounds are designed for music aficionados who want their music to be heard with highs, lows and mid-tones, all through powerful and great-sounding 40mm drivers. The battery life is about 20 hours, and a Aux-in port will let you attach a 3.5mm cable for direct listening.

The Toxix headphones feature 30mm drivers, a built-in microphone and 10 hours of battery life.

Each of the new headphones have different color options, so check the iFrogz site for the choices.

Online: zagg.com

ITUNES MUSIC

The top 10 songs on iTunes for the week ending Jan. 4:

1. "Thunder," Imagine Dragons
2. "Perfect," Ed Sheeran
3. "Havana" (feat. Young Thug), Camila Cabello
4. "Feel It Still," Portugal. The Man
5. "rockstar" (feat. 21 Savage), Post Malone
6. "Believer," Imagine Dragons
7. "Shape of You," Ed Sheeran
8. "Meant to Be" (feat. Florida Georgia Line), Bebe Rexha
9. "LOVE," (FEAT. Zacari), Kendrick Lamar
10. "Sorry Not Sorry," Demi Lovato

— Compiled by AP

SPOTIFY MUSIC

The top 10 songs on Spotify for the week ending Jan. 9:

1. "rockstar" (feat. 21 Savage), Post Malone
2. "Havana" (feat. Young Thug), Camila Cabello
3. "River" (feat. Ed Sheeran), Eminem
4. "Finest" (Remix, feat. Cardi B), Bruno Mars
5. "New Rules," Dua Lipa
6. "Wolves," Selena Gomez
7. "Him & I" (with Halsey), G-Eazy
8. "Echame La Culpa," Luis Fonsi
9. "Let You Down," NF
10. "Perfect," Ed Sheeran

— Compiled by Stars & Stripes

ITUNES MOVIES

The top 10 movies on iTunes for the week ending Jan. 7:

1. "American Made"
2. "Dunkirk"
3. "Kingsman: The Golden Circle"
4. "Battle of the Sexes"
5. "The Mountain Between Us"
6. "Blade Runner 2049"
7. "Home Again"
8. "Despicable Me 3"
9. "Brad's Status"
10. "Boywatch"



— Compiled by AP

VIDEO GAMES

Game Informer Magazine ranks the top 10 games for June:

1. "Injustice 2," PS4, Xbox One
2. "PlayerUnknown's Battlegrounds," PC
3. "Dirt 4," PS4, Xbox One, PC
4. "Prey," PS4, Xbox One, PC
5. "Arms," Switch
6. "Perception," PS4, Xbox One, PC
7. "Tekken 7," PS4, Xbox One
8. "Old Man's Journey," PC, iOS, Android
9. "Embers of Mirrim," PS4
10. "NBA Playgrounds," PS4, Xbox One, Switch

— Compiled by TNS

APPS

The top paid iPhone apps for the week ending Jan. 7:

1. Minecraft
2. Heads Up!
3. 1 Second Everyday: Video Diary
4. NBA 2K18
5. Getting Over It
6. Geometry Dash
7. The Game of Life
8. Bloons TD 5
9. Facetime
10. Plague Inc.

— Compiled by AP

WEEKEND

CHECK IT OUT

Events, entertainment and other ways to fill your free time

1

'Star Trek: Discovery' hits first-season stride

AFN-dependent viewers have it better than they used to, but it still stinks to be behind the stateside curve on certain shows, if they're available on AFN at all. "Star Trek: Discovery" provides the rare instance where those abroad are getting programming that those in the U.S. might not — or at least have to pay extra for. "Discovery" is the first series developed for the (not free) CBS All Access service, and the first new Star Trek programming since 2005.

The series returns from its midseason slumber on Saturday with the episode "Despite Yourself," which sends its cast into their own darkest timeline with a reminder that utopia comes at a cost.

- 'Star Trek: Discovery' midseason premiere airs Saturday on AFN-Spectrum.



Sonequa Martin-Green, left, plays First Officer Michael Burnham on "Star Trek: Discovery."

CBS

2

Hawkins, Corden go fishing for love

Delightful British actress Sally Hawkins stars in two movies presently in theaters, "Paddington 2" and "The Shape of Water." Hawkins has gotten several nominations thus far for her role as a mute custodian who falls for a mysterious sea creature in "Water." Late-night host James Corden saw an opportunity to have a bit of fun with Hawkins recently when she was a guest on his "Late Late Show." Corden, as a sea creature, and Hawkins explore what an internet-arranged date between the two might be like.

- Watch it at tinyurl.com/y8ny2xlg.



Fox Searchlight Pictures

Sally Hawkins in "The Shape of Water"

3

Charli XCX taking risks

Blossoming pop star Charli XCX doesn't mind mixing it up with catchy, synth-heavy songs. On her new mixtape, "Pop 2," she recruits some friends and shares the airwaves generously, resulting in worthy tunes that are poignant, memorable and in some cases, even fun.

- More music news, reviews on Pages 37-38.



Photo by Jesse Jenkins

WEEKEND: MOVIES

The best of both worlds

'The Post' gives Hanks perfect vehicle to combine his love of history and passion for acting

By JOSH ROTTENBERG
Los Angeles Times

In spring and summer 1971, the American political landscape was on fire. In March, the Weather Underground set off a bomb in the U.S. Capitol. In April, half a million people marched on Washington to protest the Vietnam War. And in June, the Nixon administration battled with the New York Times and the Washington Post over the publication of the classified Pentagon Papers, which revealed years of deception at the highest levels of the government regarding the conduct of the war.

At the time, Tom Hanks wasn't particularly aware of all this. He was a 14-year-old kid from Oakland, Calif., finishing up his run at Bret Harte Junior High, and he had things other than politics on his mind.

"I didn't pay that much attention to what was going on," Hanks recalled on a recent afternoon in Santa Monica, Calif. "I paid attention to things that 14-year-olds pay attention to: the Oakland Raiders and the California Golden Seals hockey team and girls and stuff."

Cut to winter 2017, and the American political landscape is once again on fire. One of Hollywood's most universally beloved stars, Hanks is now 61, though he still has a boyish, excitable quality — amplified this afternoon by the double caffeine hit of a Diet Coke and a latte. And this time, he is very much engaged with what's going on.

In Steven Spielberg's new period drama, "The Post," which goes into wide release this weekend, Hanks stars as the late Washington Post editor Ben Bradlee, who, along with the paper's pioneering publisher, Katharine Graham (Meryl Streep), stepped in to publish the Pentagon Papers after the Nixon administration sued the New York Times to halt publication.

With critics lauding Hanks' performance as the brash, charismatic Bradlee — portrayed by Jason Robards in an Oscar-winning turn in 1976's "All the President's Men" — "The Post" has suddenly placed the actor not only in this year's awards-season conversation but in the thick of today's political debate.

A longtime history buff, Hanks marvels

at the echoes between then and now as the Trump administration engages daily in its own battle with the mainstream news media. "All this time passes and nothing really changed," he said. "It was the same sort of language and almost the same subject then as what's happening now — minus Twitter feeds and cable news."

If anything, Hanks sees the situation today as even more fraught, the stakes even higher. "The Nixon administration waged almost a quaint assault on the First Amendment," he said. "The facts were understood then — it was the opinion you had of them that was up for grabs. The thing that's happening now is almost a Bizarro Superman war on reason."

As "The Post" was shooting last summer, Hanks found the historical resonances at times downright uncanny.

"There was one day where something had happened with the Russia investigation — it might have been (former national security advisor Michael) Flynn getting fired — and we were watching it on one of the period TVs in Ben Bradlee's office," he remembered. "Here we are, in these Nixon-era clothes, watching on a Nixon-era TV, and we all looked up, like, 'What year is this? Is this a Rod Serling ['Twilight Zone'] episode where we have a magic TV that can see into the future?'"

Years ago, Hanks had met Bradlee, who died in 2014, and his wife, Sally Quinn,

socially on a number of occasions through a mutual friend, the late writer and filmmaker Nora Ephron.

"He was a big personality," Hanks said. "Everybody had an anecdote about Ben. Everybody had an amusing saga." Diving into the research, Hanks keyed in on one quote from Bradlee that seemed to sum up his hard-nosed yet idealistic journalistic ethos: "You have to be cynical without being a cynic."

"The Post" marks Hanks' fifth time being directed by Spielberg, following "Saving Private Ryan," "Catch Me If You Can," "The Terminal" and "Bridge of Spies." But the director says Hanks has never taken on a role quite like this one, in part because Bradlee himself was a unique figure.

"There was a kind of sexiness about Ben Bradlee in the way he led the newsroom and the way he tenaciously would fight for a story — even fight his own publisher or anybody who pushed back on him," Spielberg said. "There were big dimensions, big colors, that I don't believe Tom has ever played before. There was a kind of machismo about Bradlee that Tom hasn't brought to many other characters in his storied career."

'A real bond of trust'

Over the years, Spielberg and Hanks — whose working relationship goes all the way back to the 1986 comedy "The Money Pit," which Spielberg produced — have established a deep creative mind-meld. "We have a similar philosophy of less is more," Spielberg said, explaining that he will often trim lines of dialogue to get more quickly to the essence of a scene, only to find that Hanks has independently marked the same lines with a red pen in his script.

"They have a real bond of trust," said "The Post" producer Kristie Macosko Krieger, who has worked with Spielberg for more than two decades. "They know each of them is going to show up on set with their best ideas and they'll make it through the day together as a team."

While collaborating with Spielberg on "The Post" may have been old hat, Hanks had never worked with Streep before, a somewhat surprising turn of events that neither can quite explain. "Everyone asks why I had never worked with Tom

before — it is something that I had always hoped would happen," Streep said, adding, half-jokingly, "but, as he is 61 and I am 68, in Hollywood that means I would only ever have been appropriately cast as his mother or his grandmother."

"Meryl is usually in movies about Meryl and Tom is in movies about Tom, and I think what was so great for them is that this was a movie about a relationship," said "The Post" producer Amy Pascal, who acquired first-time screenwriter Liz Hannah's script for the film last fall. "It was about something that movies are never about, which is a platonic love story between a man and a woman and how they work together."

Hanks has never shied away from expressing his own political views, to the point that over the years he's been asked numerous times about his interest in running for office, a prospect he dismisses out of hand. "Yeah, boy, that would be fun, wouldn't it?" he said, rolling his eyes. "Based on what? That's what I always come back to: We have people in office who are just good on TV. I don't think that's what we're looking for here."

Since President Trump's election, though, Hanks, like many in Hollywood, has felt compelled to become more politically outspoken.

"I think everybody has a point where they have to decide to go man the barricade somehow," he said. "Some issue comes up and you just say, 'Are you ... kidding me?' Talking about Pocahontas in front of the Navajo code talkers — if you don't get why that might not fly, there's no hope for you. But then, if you've got neo-Nazis doing a torchlight parade somewhere — no, I'm sorry, that's a different sort of territory and that ends up being downright dangerous."

Asked if he is worried about the nation's future in these deeply polarized times, Hanks — who consumes endless books of history in his spare time (and recently published his own collection of short stories, "Uncommon Type: Some Stories") — delivers an impassioned analysis that goes on for more than nine minutes straight.

He references Joseph McCarthy, Father Coughlin, the segregationist Dixiecrats of the 1940s and the protests of the Vietnam era. He touches on World War II Japanese American internment camps, FDR's attempt

CONTINUED ON PAGE 25



20th Century Fox

WEEKEND: MOVIES

'The Post'

Film about the past speaks to present times

BY KENNETH TURAN
Los Angeles Times

“The Post” goes against the contemporary Hollywood grain. Propulsive major studio cinema made with a real-world purpose in mind, it’s a risky venture that succeeds across the board.

Prodded into existence by Steven Spielberg, one of the few filmmakers capable of making the studio system do his bidding and of persuading major players such as Meryl Streep and Tom Hanks to go along with him, “The Post” takes on a particularly counterintuitive subject.

That would be The Washington Post’s 1971 role in publishing what came to be known as the Pentagon Papers, a top-secret 47-volume, 7,000-page Department of Defense study of the war in Vietnam that exposed all manner of official prevarications and outright lies extending over the terms of four presidents.

For one thing, as the gripping Liz Hannah and Josh Singer script makes clear, the breaking of this story was initially owned local, stock and barrel by the paper’s rival The New York Times, which might be why Post editor Ben Bradlee gave it only 14 pages in his autobiography compared with 60 pages for Watergate.

For another, there has already been an excellent Washington Post movie in “All the President’s Men.” Also, given that the Oscar-winning pro-journalism drama “Spotlight” came out just two years ago, the market wasn’t necessarily desperate for another one.

That’s just the point. “The Post” is the rare Hollywood movie made not to fulfill marketing imperatives but because the filmmakers felt the subject matter had real and immediate relevance to the crisis both society and print journalism find themselves in right now.

When Spielberg recently told the Hollywood Reporter, “I realized this was the only year to make this film,” he was speaking

to what he saw as the immediate need for a project that in effect commandeers yesterday to comment on today.

Aiming to combine what the director calls “a chase film with journalists” with an essential civics lesson, “The Post” showcases the value of newspapers hanging together and holding government accountable for deception even in the face of possibly crippling financial pressures.

Given that Spielberg only committed to “The Post” in March while already involved in the effects-laden “Ready Player One,” due out in March 2018, this film had to be made with remarkable speed to meet the 2017 deadline.

Collaborating with his regular team, including cinematographer Janusz Kaminski, editor Michael Kahn (Sarah Broshar co-edited), production designer Rick Carter and composer John Williams (costume designer Ann Roth is new to the group), Spielberg seems to have been energized by the self-imposed time restraints.

“The Post,” made with the pacing of a thriller, has an appealing sense of urgency about it, with the director, echoing newspaper films past such as Sam Fuller’s “Park Row,” working in a lean, focused style that also feels loose and unconstrained.

Though Hanks’ Bradlee is obviously a key player, “The Post” is really about the professional coming of age of Streep’s Katharine Graham, the owner of the Post.

Daughter and widow of the two previous Post owners, respectively, and not anyone who thought she’d ever be in charge, Graham had to simultaneously navigate the shoals of Wall Street by taking her company public while considering publishing secret information that could both hurt the public offering and land key people in jail.

(According to the press material, first-time screenwriter Hannah’s script focused more on Graham, so Singer, an Oscar winner for “Spotlight,” was brought on to pump up Bradlee and the rest of the newsroom staff.)



20th Century Fox

“The Post” tells the true story of the unlikely partnership between The Washington Post’s Katharine Graham (Meryl Streep, right), the first female publisher of a major American newspaper, and editor Ben Bradlee (Tom Hanks, left) as they race to catch up with The New York Times to expose a massive cover-up of government secrets that spanned three decades and four U.S. presidents.

Before we get to that newsroom, however, “The Post” flashes back to Vietnam in 1966, when a young Daniel Ellsberg (Matthew Rhys) hangs with troops on a fact-finding mission for Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara (Bruce Greenwood).

Shocked to hear McNamara say one thing in private about U.S. military prospects and something else to the press, Ellsberg helps write a massive report for the Rand Corp. on American involvement that we see him sneak out of its offices in the dead of night in order to make Xerox copies.

Bradlee, for his part, might be dealing with mundane problems such as how to cope with President Richard Nixon’s attempt to bar Post reporters from covering daughter Tricia’s wedding, but he’s heard rumors that The New York Times is onto something big.

Playing catch-up once the Times publishes, Bradlee assigns reporter Ben Bagdikian (Bob Odenkirk), who has a hunch

Ellsberg is the source of the leak, to obtain the Post’s own copy of the papers.

When the Nixon administration asks a federal judge to enjoin the Times from publishing, Bradlee sees an opportunity. “If the Times shuts down,” he says, “we’re in business.”

But first he has to persuade Graham, who wants to believe that “quality and profitability” go hand in hand for newspapers, but worries that repercussions of publishing will doom the public offering.

Screenwriters Hannah and Singer nicely marshal their arguments here (“We have to be a check on their power,” Bradlee says, “if we don’t hold them accountable, who will?”) and the parallels to the position of the press today are strong and vivid, as they are meant to be.

Though “The Post’s” supporting players are key, the film is in some ways a two-hander, and both Hanks and Streep understand that their push-pull rela-

tionship is the film’s emotional center.

Realizing that he does not physically resemble Bradlee as “President’s Men” Oscar winner Jason Robards did, Hanks finds his own path to make the editor come alive, while the remarkable way Streep captures and conveys Graham’s essence is quite special.

One of the intriguing aspects of “The Post” are the connections between its creators and to journalists. Producer Amy Pascal is married to former New York Times reporter Bernard Weinraub, and Spielberg has dedicated the film to the late Nora Ephron, who, along with her husband, Nick Pileggi, were summer house neighbors of Spielberg’s in New York’s Hamptons. “The Post’s” message is personal for him, and he’s done all he can to make audiences feel the same way.

“The Post” is rated PG-13, for language and brief war violence. Running time: 115 minutes.

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to pack the Supreme Court and William Manchester’s sweeping historical tome “The Glory and the Dream.” He rhapsodizes at length about the First Amendment — it’s “a doozy, man” — and sings the opening lines of the 1970s “Schoolhouse Rock” song about the Constitution from memory.

A ‘resilient’ country

The bottom line? Hanks is concerned, but not despairing. “We’re certainly in this spiral where disinterest and ignorance is holding more sway than it usually does,” he said. “But the country is very resilient. It rights itself.”

For all of his “pontificating,” as he self-deprecatingly calls it, Hanks is well aware that he is neither an academic nor an elected leader. He is an actor and an entertainer, and he is perfectly content with that. “Ben Bradlee knew that he had a spirit that people dug — he would say, ‘Ah, the fun!’ I get that I have the same thing for my job.”

Hanks, of course, also has a spirit that people dig. Indeed,



20th Century Fox

In 1971, The Washington Post editor Ben Bradlee (Tom Hanks, left) and publisher Katharine Graham (Meryl Streep) incurred the wrath of the U.S. government for publishing the Pentagon Papers.

he has long radiated such an easygoing charm onscreen and off that — even with five Oscar nominations and two wins — Streep believes he remains underappreciated as an actor.

“The thing about Tom is his phenomenal gift has been taken for granted for so long, his place in the Hall of Fame so confirmed over time, that sometimes I think we mistake the ease with which he delivers it as ‘easy,’” Streep said. “Nothing about it is easy, except his total embrace of the work.”

Accolades aside, after all these years, Hanks says he still feels as engaged with the work as he ever has, going back to the earliest days of his career when he was starring on an early-’80s sitcom that regularly involved dressing in drag for laughs.

“From something as joyful and fun as — forgive me — ‘Bosom Buddies’ to The Post, it’s all these things where you’re examining a theme that’s locked deep in the text, where you’re trying to interpret all this behavior and words into an examination of something that’s bigger than yourself,” he said. “I think that’s a blast. I can’t think of a better way to make a buck.”

WEEKEND: MOVIES



An ordinary businessman (Liam Neeson) gets caught up in a criminal plot during his daily train ride in "The Commuter."

LIONSGATE/AP

By JAKE COYLE
Associated Press

The tagline for the Liam Neeson Metro-North thriller "The Commuter" — "Lives are on the line" — feels like a missed opportunity. I would have gone with: "The quiet car is about to get loud."

It's been 10 years since Neeson's unlikely reign as the movies' best action hero began with "Taken" — the little Paris kidnapping that unlocked Neeson's special set of skills. What has followed has been a decade of lean, blunt and glum thrillers (three "Taken" movies, "Non-Stop," "The Grey") anchored by the looming and still quite potent presence of Neeson.

Neeson has suggested that, at 65, he's nearing the end of the line. So "The Commuter," which reteams him for the fourth time with Spanish director Jaime Collet-Serra, may be one of our last chances to see Neeson kick some butt. "The Commuter" rides very much the same rail as his previous movies with Collet-Serra; it's a hostage crisis tick-tock that speeds straight ahead. Collet-Serra's genre mechanics, stylized and sober, are efficient. His trains run on time, even if — especially in "The Commuter" — a rush-hour's worth of implausibility eventually wrecks the thrill.

Neeson plays Michael McCauley, an ex-cop who has spent his past ten years as a life insurance salesman, commuting Monday through Friday into Grand Central from his family's suburban home up the Hudson in Tarrytown, N.Y. The movie's clever overlapping opening montage shows the repetition of his days, begun every day with 1010 Wins on the radio, a ride from his wife to the train station and the crowded but solitary walk through Grand Central.

One day is a particularly bad one. McCauley is fired five years short of retirement. With his savings depleted by the 2008 financial crisis and college tuition coming soon for his high-school graduate son, McCauley's panic is palpable. He stops for a drink with his old police partner (Patrick Wilson) before boarding the train home. There, he's greeted by a Hitchcockian stranger on the train (Vera Farmiga) who explains that McCauley will make \$100,000 on his ride home if he can only find the person on the train "who doesn't belong."

McCauley, as he soon discovers, has stepped into the plot of an absurdly powerful syndicate that will use him to ferret out a crucial FBI witness. The gaps in the story's logic aren't to be minded. The web around McCauley is mysterious. And for Cold Spring, a few steps past McCauley's usual one, to be epicenter of such intrigue is curious. But then again, even the Feds deserve a bit of antiquing and a brisk hike.

Most eyebrow raising for the 1.6 to 3.1 million who trudge into and out of Manhattan every day will be an unforfeivable incongruity in the train's otherwise largely accurate path. It makes various subway stops through Manhattan, when every commuter since the time of "Revolutionary Road" knows it runs straight to Harlem. It's the kind of inaccuracy that will cause untold swarms of straphangers to throw their MetroCards at the screen.

Collet-Serra, whose "Non-Stop" similarly relished the confined space of an airplane cabin, is too interested with swooping his camera through the train to care much about the blur on the outside. But he knows well how to shoot Neeson, following the actor's hulking frame from car to car.

Their movies are, in part, parables for the terrorism age. Like in "Non-Stop," where Neeson played an air marshal, the protagonist of "The Commuter" must wrestle with the morality of uncovering the one threat in a sea of maybe-innocent, maybe-guilty faces, some of them "regulars" (daily riders), some of them unfamiliar. As before, Neeson is a lone warrior trying to stay decent in a fallen world. With pandering references to the big banks throughout, "The Commuter" has just enough smarts to make its final destination disappointing.

The old equation of man-plus-locomotive has been a dependable one for the movies since Buster Keaton rode the rails in "The General." (See also: Burt Lancaster in "The Train," and Denzel Washington in "Unstoppable.") "The Commuter" isn't in that class, but there are worse tickets to punch, especially in January. Such a woe of time of year for new releases warrants repeating the old warning: If you see something, say something.

"The Commuter" is rated PG-13 for intense action/violence, and language. Running time: 104 minutes.



The little bear from Peru (voiced by Ben Whishaw) is back in "Paddington 2," the sequel to the successful, London-set family film.

WARNER BROS. PICTURES/AP

'Paddington 2' unbearably wonderful

By LESLIE FELPERIN
The Hollywood Reporter

"Paddington 2" presents a righteous moral message that's particularly appropriate for these troubled times. Just as the original pic "Paddington" made an impassioned case for accepting and welcoming immigrants (sadly a lesson not learned, judging by Brexit), the follow-up makes a plea for kindness, civility and looking for the good in people at a time when rudeness, insults and prejudice based on appearances are on the rise everywhere we look. "Paddington 2" won't save the world, but its existence makes everything just that tiny bit better and more, well, bearable.

With its coincidences, mysteries and mini-puzzles, returning director Paul King and his co-screenwriter Simon Farnaby have devised an ingenious plot, a delightfully retro mechanism that as precise as one of the many gizmos featured in the story, from the gears and snarls of rope and electrical cable that form so many accidental traps for the little bear hero to the complex mechanisms that operate steam trains, which feature in the snappy climax.

The basic idea is that Paddington's (the West London-dwelling Peruvian bear once again voiced impeccably by Ben Whishaw) newest neighbor in fictional street Windsor Crescent is Phoenix Buchanan (Hugh Grant), a vain, aging thespian who's been reduced to fronting dog food commercials. Learning of the discovery of a one-off 19th century pop-up book (described charmingly as a "popping book" by Jim Broadbent's immigrant antique dealer) that Paddington wants to buy and send to his elderly Aunt Lucy in Peru, Buchanan steals the tome, knowing that it contains clues to find a hidden treasure that could fund his years-in-the-planning one-man show. During the theft, Paddington tries unsuccessfully to capture the culprit, unaware that it's really Buchanan.

Unfortunately, Paddington is the one

who ends up in jail, an imposing Victorian pile, where no bedtime stories are read, work is hard and all fear the prison's fierce head chef Knuckles McGinty (Brendan Gleeson). But Paddington, who insists on looking for the good in everyone like Lucy told him he should, manages to crack McGinty's hard heart via the magic that is marmalade. Together, they make the prison a literally brighter, more cheery place. Meanwhile, beyond those walls in deepest West London, the Browns, Paddington's adopted family (returning players Hugh Bonneville, Sally Hawkins, Julie Walters, Madeleine Harris and Samuel Joslin) struggle to find a way to clear Paddington's name.

At one point, the Scots housekeeper Mrs. Bird intones solemnly that actors are "the evilest people in the world," a sentiment clearly not shared by the filmmakers here who have created such a splendid, daintily lit showcase for the assembled ensemble. Although it's a rather crowded cast, just about everyone gets a moment to shine, drop a plum line or pull a funny face.

What's especially treasurable is that the film feels very true to its own tag of Paddington, with all that so very British clipped diction and gentle tweaking of class sensibilities, the jewel-like colors of the sets and costumes, and the glorious flurries of old-school animation that blend seamlessly with the ultra-high resolution work on Paddington himself (referenced against Whishaw's own expressions) and the other digital characters. (Kudos are due to animation director Pablo Grillo and the other digital effects teams especially.)

Like an intricate cascade diorama, this is a work of art built up from thousands of tiny, thoughtful details that no one could catch on just one viewing. Given the way kids like to watch things at home on an endless loop, "Paddington 2" will reward weary parents with frequent chances to spot gaps they might have missed the first, second or 20th time around.

"Paddington 2" is rated PG for some action and mild rude humor. Running time: 103 minutes.

'Proud Mary'

Taraji P. Henson stars as Mary, a hit woman working for an organized crime family in Boston, whose life is completely turned around when she meets a young boy whose path she crosses when a professional hit goes bad in "Proud Mary." Co-starring Danny Glover. A review of the film was not available at press time. The action thriller is rated R for violence. Running time: 99 minutes.



Sony Pictures

WEEKEND: QUICK TRIPS

Europe

Frankfurt on foot

Air passengers on layovers see city thanks to walking tour

By ALEXANDRA PECCI
Special to The Washington Post

In the just-waking hours of a cool, misty morning, we slipped into Frankfurt, Germany, the way dreams slide between vivid reality and hazy memory: surreal and ephemeral.

A smiling woman wearing a hairnet reached over a counter, and speaking neither English nor German, offered my daughter a cold, skinny frankfurter. We sleepily wandered through meandering lanes flanked by medieval, half-timbered houses that could have been the backdrop to a Brothers Grimm fairy tale. We passed under the old city gate into a long-dry moat at the foot of a white castle, walking among ancient, moss-carpeted stone steps and walls covered in thick ivy. Huge bunches of white asparagus and piles of fragrant lilacs crowded tables at a weekend farmers market where we, the interlopers, snapped pictures as locals eyed us curiously. We glided up and down on a teeter-totter in a deserted playground, while enormous white swans preened their feathers on the banks of the Main River a few feet away.

I felt lightheaded and dazed. My husband, Brian, daughter, Chloe, and I had just gotten off an overnight flight from Boston. We were heading to Barcelona, but the eye-poppingly cheap airfare I snagged online came with a catch: an eight-hour layover in Frankfurt.

Spending eight hours in an airport would strain the patience of most adults, let alone a 7-year-old. So I was thrilled when I discovered Frankfurt on Foot, a local company that counts a layover tour among its walking offerings.

Layovers are usually spent in a weird netherworld of being somewhere without really being there at all. I've been to Paris-Charles de Gaulle Airport, for instance, but I haven't actually been to France. Escaping the airport to explore Frankfurt, even just for a few hours, felt exciting and strange.

"We are allowed to do this, aren't we?" Brian asked me as we made our way through the airport.

None of us slept on the airplane, so we were bleary-eyed and hungry when we met our guide, Jo Afor, at the airport at about 8 a.m. to begin a private tour. I worried for a moment about how rumpled and sleepy we looked as we shuffled toward her, lugging heavy carry-on bags. If she noticed, she didn't seem to mind. Instead, she cheerfully showed us where we could store our luggage for the day (at 7 euros a bag) and led us



Left: A flower merchant at the farmers market in Höchst. The quiet neighborhood in the western part of Frankfurt, Germany, feels markedly different from the city's busy metropolis.

Below: A walking tour with Frankfurt on Foot, a local company that counts a layover tour among its offerings, included Höchst Castle.

PHOTOS BY
ALEXANDRA PECCI
for The Washington Post

KNOW & GO

Frankfurt on Foot

Phone: (+49) (0) 1520-846-4200; website: frankfurt-on-foot.com. Offerings include a city tour departing from Frankfurt Airport. The layover must be of seven hours or longer. The layover tour costs 125 euros for one person, or about \$149; add 10 euros, or about \$12, per additional person. (Fees must be paid in euros.) All tours are in English.

outside and onto a city bus.

"Wow, this is great. So easy," I marveled as we settled into our seats.

"We try to take all the stress out of it for you," Jo replied.

The "we" covered herself and her husband, David, both Ohio natives living in Germany as co-owners of the tour business, and their company's other guides. I was grateful. We never would have visited the city on a layover without a guide, fearing that we'd get lost and miss our connecting flight.

Wielding her perfect German and knowledge of the city, Jo took us to Höchst, a quiet neighborhood in the western part of the city that felt markedly different from Frankfurt's busy metropo-



lis. Jo and I had emailed before our trip, and she suggested visiting the town for its morning farmers market and streets that were quiet and easy to navigate for Chloe, who has a walking disability.

"You'll go back to Boston and your friends will say, 'That's not Frankfurt!'" Jo said as we snapped pictures of the pretty streets. Höchst's distinctive green, pale pink and yellow half-timbered buildings earned it a spot on the German Half-Timbered House Road, which weaves through the country, connecting cities and towns that feature beautiful examples of that architecture.

"This part of Frankfurt didn't get bombed in the war," Jo said.

"That's why it looks so nice." She pointed out carved Roman numerals on the sides of the houses that helped the builders assemble them out of corresponding pieces.

"It's like Ikea of the Middle Ages," Jo quipped.

Also beautifully preserved in Höchst: St. Justin's Church, with a basilica consecrated in 850, making it one of the oldest standing houses of worship in Germany.

We cobbled together a mix-and-match breakfast at the farmers market, Wochenmarkt Höchst, which sets up under tents three times a week, and at its nearby indoor market while we sampled freshly pressed apple and apple-pear juices, cold

frankfurters, pastries, chewy, fist-sized rolls called brotchen ("little bread," Jo told us) and bauernkaese, or farmer's cheese.

Through the narrow, cobbled lanes, we meandered until we reached the white Höchst Castle, which belonged to the archbishop of Mainz and was built in stages between the 13th and 16th centuries.

We marveled at its tall tower and dry moat, and passed through a stone gate to emerge on the banks of the Main River. There, we happened upon a quiet playground and swans waiting for some food scraps by the ferry dock.

Behind us, the old city fortifications marked flood lines and dates, commemorating when the river waters spilled over their banks to creep up the high, towering walls that surrounded the city.

Sleep finally caught up with Chloe at the bus stop. As we waited to go back to the airport, she curled up in her wheelchair and fell asleep, not waking during the bus ride or when we said goodbye to Jo at the airport.

When she woke up nearly two hours later, we were back in the terminal where we started, about to board our flight to Barcelona. She gazed around sleepily, looking a little confused. I wouldn't have blamed her if she wondered whether our jaunt into Frankfurt had been only a dream. It felt a little like one to me.

WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Europe

Dublin: Big-city sights, small-town smiles

As the capital of the country that gets its vote for the friendliest in the European Union, Dublin is a sightseer's delight. It's safe, thriving and extremely accessible. Dubliners are energetic and helpful, and visitors enjoy a big-town cultural scene wrapped up in a small-town smile.

Part of the reason Ireland is one of my favorite destinations is that when visiting the Emerald Isle, I enjoy the sensation that I'm understanding a foreign language. This is the land of great craic (conversation), where people have that charming and uniquely Irish "gift of gab."

On my most recent trip there, I opted to take Uber from the airport. My driver, Paul, called to confirm the pick-up spot and said in a heavy Irish accent, "I'll meet you at the turd lane." I asked, "The what?" He said, more clearly, "The TURD lane." Before I asked him to repeat himself a third time, I got it.

As we drove, I asked him about the economy. He said it's "grand" — pointing out the crane-filled skyline. Dublin seems to be a huge construction site. But Paul explained that it hasn't always been this way. During his childhood with six siblings, he said, "it was first up, best dressed." He joked that "People were so poor back then, for shoes your mum would paint your feet black and tie on a ribbon."

Ireland's charming rough edge is being smoothed out by its new affluence. I notice the Irish don't swear as much. And the air's cleaner, too — even the pubs are smoke-free.

With Ireland's invigorated economy comes a renewed focus on tourism. On this visit I discovered intriguing new sights and experiences, had a great time

at some iconic spots and each night enjoyed fun and affordable entertainment.

Grafton Street is the place to feel the new energy of Dublin. Once filled with noisy traffic, today this is a pedestrianized people zone lined with cafes, pubs and



Rick Steves

shops. Grafton Street leads to St. Stephen's Green, which used to host public whippings and hangings, but has been transformed into a lush city park. On a sunny afternoon it's an inviting lunchtime escape.

The National Museum shows

off Ireland's history, with treasures from the Stone Age to modern times. Its archaeology branch is itself a national treasure, displaying 4,000-year-old gold jewelry, 2,000-year-old bog mummies, 1,000-year-old Viking swords and the collection's superstar — the exquisitely wrought Tara Brooch. A visit here gives valuable context to the sights you see as you tour the rest of the city and the country.

To see the famed Book of Kells, arguably the most important and beautiful piece of European medieval art, head to Trinity College. This 1,200-year-old version of the four gospels is filled with illuminated manuscripts. With colorful pigments, braided letters and borders and animals crouching between sentences, it's a jungle of intricate designs and a reminder that Ireland was a bright spot during Europe's Dark Ages.



Courtesy of ricksteves.com

Dublin musicians perform during a musical pub crawl.

This trip was also my first chance to visit Epic: The Irish Emigration Museum. I had never fully appreciated the Irish diaspora until taking in this high-tech exhibit, which explains the forces that propelled so many Irish around the globe. With all the anxiety surrounding immigration in the U.S. today, it's thought provoking to learn how many Americans were just as wiggled out about Irish immigrants 160 years ago.

I'm less enthralled with one of Dublin's most popular sights — the Guinness Storehouse, sort of a Disneyland for beer lovers. Housed in the company's old fermentation plant, this place is a pilgrimage for many — but it's expensive and not a typical

"brewery tour" with conveyor belts of beer bottles. Instead of historic artifacts, you'll find high-decibel music and a tall, pint-glass-shaped glass atrium — 14 million pints big — soaring past four floors of exhibitions and cafes to the sky. A highlight here is the top-floor Gravity Bar, with a commanding 360-degree view of Dublin and vistas all the way to the sea.

No matter what you see or do in Dublin, it's an exciting time to visit. This dynamic city has a fine story to tell and people with a natural knack for telling it.

Rick Steves (ricksteves.com) writes European travel guidebooks and hosts travel shows on public television and public radio. Email him at rick@ricksteves.com and follow his blog on Facebook.

TOP TRAVEL PICKS

Capitals of Culture

Each year, the European Union designates two cities to serve as European Capitals of Culture for a calendar year. The initiative aims to highlight the richness and diversity of European cultures and raise awareness of common history and values. In 2018, Valletta, Malta, and Leeuwarden, Netherlands, bear the titles. Both cities will hold special events to kick off their time in the spotlight and throughout the year.

Valletta, named one of 2018's hottest destinations by countless travel and tourism publications, starts things off with an Opening Week fest Jan. 14-21. A highlight comes on Jan. 20, when Erba' Pjazze (Four Squares) offers an evening of spectacle, including an aerobatics show, contemporary dance, choral symphony, and 3-D projections. Each show is 20 minutes long and repeats five times from 7 to 11 p.m.

Honor guards, brass bands, giant marionettes and clowns animate other parts of the city. For more, see tinyurl.com/7mwn47l.

Leeuwarden, the capital of the province of Friesland some 100 miles northeast of Amsterdam, celebrates its opening weekend Jan. 26-27. From 7 p.m. Jan. 26, museums, cafes and other public spaces throughout Friesland will be open to allow local residents



Karen Bradbury

Read more about things to do in the Europe Traveler blog: stripes.com/blogs/europe-traveler

to share their stories. On the evening of Jan. 27, the event's theme of an open sense of community will be brought to life by choirs, orchestras, brass bands and the North Netherlands Symphony Orchestra performing as one. See tinyurl.com/yazvp3hu.

Balloons above the Alps

Back-to-back ballooning events await visitors to Austria's Ski Amade region, a vast ski area roughly 50 miles southeast of Salzburg, from Jan. 13-27. Events center around Filzmoos, a mountain village ideally positioned for launches of both short jaunts over nearby valleys or longer flights over high Alpine ranges.

During the first week, about 30 international teams will vie for the DOPGAS Balloon Trophy,

the winner of which is determined by results in distance and target flights, the number of competitions in which the team participates and other factors.

Competitions start at 9:30 a.m. each day and run Jan. 13-20. The Hannehof Hot Air Balloon Trophy event, on Jan. 20-27, sees about 45 hot-air balloons take to the skies, weather permitting, around 9 a.m. daily from the Hammerwiese field.

Balloon Night is always a program highlight. On the evening of Jan. 14, visitors will be wowed by these colorful orbs high above pulsating to a soundtrack's beat. Mulled wine, hunter's tea, tasty treats and a display of fireworks round out an atmospheric mountain evening.

The adventure factor can be pushed up a notch by booking a ride in one of the balloons. Icy temperatures, snow-covered landscapes and the lack of any thermal currents to hinder control of the balloons make a wintertime ride a lasting memory. Ascents can be booked through the end of February. About two hours of flight time and an experience lasting about five hours from start to finish costs 290 euros. Learn more at filzmoos.at/en/winter-balloon-ride.html.

Auto show in Brussels

Fans of flash cars, motorbikes



Courtesy of filzmoos.at

Hot-air ballooning events center around Filzmoos, Austria, a mountain village ideally positioned for launches of both short jaunts over nearby valleys or longer flights over high Alpine ranges.

and other means of motorized transportation may wish to make way to the 96th edition of the Brussels Motor Show, running through Jan. 21 in the Belgian capital. More than half a million visitors are expected to visit the show in its 10-day run.

Since all the major makes on the Belgian market are exhibiting, eight halls are needed to showcase the cars alone. Motorcyclists will find inspiration in Hall 9, home to the Circus Trial Tour extreme biking show, a chill zone with a vintage vibe, and a biker's corner serving two

specially brewed beers.

Visitors ages 4-12 receive a goodie-filled backpack on entry; they'll like the kids' zone with its go-carts, life-size model of Lightning McQueen from Disney's "Cars" movies, and more.

The show takes place at the Brussels Expo, Place de la Belgique 1. Adult admission costs 15 euros; tickets for ages 6-12 go for 9 euros. Hours are from 11 a.m. weekdays and 10 a.m. weekends; the show closes at 7 p.m. except on Jan. 12, 15 and 19, when it's open until 10 p.m. Learn more at autosalon.be/en.

WEEKEND: FOOD & DINING

Europe



PHOTOS BY JOHN VANDIVER/Stars and Stripes

Drei Mohren is a Turkish restaurant in Sindelfingen's old-town area. The eatery operates out of a 300-year-old building that was restored several years ago.

After Hours: Germany

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

The name would put any American eatery out of business, but in Germany the pejorative seems to cause little discomfort.

There are German streets called "Mohren." A German chocolate dessert makes use of the word. And for some reason, there are numerous German pharmacies called "Mohren Apotheke."

And in the little suburban Stuttgart town of Sindelfingen, there is a popular Turkish restaurant called Drei Mohren, which can be translated as "Three Blackamoors," a word today is regarded as a derogatory term for black people.

On a recent visit, the restaurant was packed with diners indulging in wonderful homemade flatbread and grilled meats in a beautifully restored 300-year-old building. Yet the weirdness of the name was hard to get past. I toggled between the menu and my iPhone to explain it.

For the restaurant, the name dates to part of the building's history as a butchery that in 1900 was known as Drei Mohren. When the building was restored in 2014, tradition overrode taste and the name was recycled for the new restaurant.

The food is great. A daily lunch menu offers unique dishes all under 10 euro (\$12), coming with a first course of soup and salad and a small dessert at the end. My dining partner ordered a gooey mix of melted feta and grilled vegetables presented in a wrapping of parchment paper.

I went with a main course of offering of veal in a tomato sauce that was topped with ultra-thin, almost grated, fries. Dollops of thick yogurt mixed in. The meal was magnificent, the service attentive. The atmosphere was



Drei Mohren offers a special lunch menu with different items each day. Feta and grilled veggies wrapped in parchment paper was a recent offering.

DREI MOHREN

Location: Lange Str. 25, 71063 Sindelfingen
Hours: 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. to 12 a.m. weekdays; 5:30 p.m.-12 a.m. Saturdays and 9:30 a.m. to 12 a.m. Sundays.
Dress: Casual
Prices: Lunch menu about \$10. Main courses \$15-\$20
Information: Phone: (49) (0) 7031 677 22 75, website 3mohren.com

— John Vandiver



Veal served with tomato sauce, thinly sliced potatoes and yogurt was a delicious choice on the menu at Drei Mohren.

warm and inviting.

Yet the name. Use of the word dates back hundreds of years in Germany. Today, the word still gets attached to places and things, but most people would consider it racist if directed at a person.

Tolerance for the word, how-

Are you already off that new year's diet?

By JENNIFER DAY
Chicago Tribune

What's that you say? You're feeling dejected because you already fell off your new year's diet? And, you — the smug one still rocking a juice cleanse: You're on edge about screwing it up, aren't you?

Let's slam the book on this diet craze thing right now. This is a long-standing obsession and one that's uniquely American. Just ask Helen Zoe Veit, an associate professor of history at Michigan State University and author of "Modern Food, Moral Food: Self-Control, Science and the Rise of Modern American Eating in the Early Twentieth Century."

As she explains it, about 100 years ago, two major technological advances (the advent of nutrition science and the industrialization of food) coincided with the rise of modern wealth-less culture.

"In America, there was this unique emphasis on rejecting what your mother or your grandmother may have told you. That was not real wisdom. Those were sort of superstitious beliefs about food, and real wisdom came from experts," Veit said.

"God forbid you follow your instinct, because that's the worst possible guide when it comes to food — that's the message," she continued. "You should be following experts, but you also have to be educated enough not to be duped."

This willingness to upend generations of tradition gave rise to the food fad.

Veit speculates that Americans' weakness for the promise of a quick food fix might stem from their remarkable mobility — both as immigrants and as domestic migrants into upend generations of tradition gave rise to the food fad.

"The idea that there's been some new discovery or revelation — often it's scientific; sometimes it's sort of spiritual," Veit said, "that how you

were doing things was wrong, and you've got to do things in quite a different way, and that will produce great results for you: I don't know of any other country in the world where that sort of relationship to food is as common or as mainstream as it is in America."

So even if we come by our food pathologies honestly, here's the thing to keep in mind: We already know what we need to do to eat better.

Forget the noise of the latest dietary study. Linda Van Horn, chief of nutrition in the Department of Preventive Medicine at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine, broke it down pretty succinctly: Make vegetables, fruits and whole grains your priority.

The more healthfully you eat, the easier it will become. Van Horn said researchers are just starting to understand the scientific underpinnings that explain why cravings typically ebb as consumption decreases.

"I can't tell you how many of our (study) participants say, 'What I'm finding is, the less sugar I eat, the less sugar I want,'" she said. "You can say the same thing about a burger or anything."

Dawn Jackson Blatner, a Chicago registered dietitian and author of "The Superfood Swap," offers these tips for improving your eating habits.

- Eat three balanced meals a day: That means a small portion of whole grains, a small portion of lean protein and a lot of vegetables, with a touch of fat added for taste. Supplement with up to two snacks, depending on how hungry you are.

- Stop and look at your plate. Consider: Do I have enough vegetables on my plate? Is that sandwich big? Am I eating more today than I did yesterday?

- Eat your meals seated at a table. Don't stand at the counter or eat while working. Consume food mindfully.

- Avoid the C.R.A.P.: chemicals, refined sugar and flour, artificial ingredients and preservatives.



DREAMSTIME/TNS

The idea that family wisdom about how and what to eat should be thrown out for the latest fad is uniquely American, according to Michigan State University historian Helen Zoe Veit.

Vandiver.john@stripes.com
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WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Europe

SAY 'AYE' TO EDINBURGH

A trip to Scotland's capital city provides a trove of storybook moments

By TOM SHRODER

Special to The Washington Post

The doors of the bus from Edinburgh airport hissed open at what we thought was the stop near our hotel. The desk clerk I'd emailed said the stop was directly in front of the hotel, which was supposed to be close to the city center. As the bus pulled away, we did not appear to be either opposite the hotel or near the center of anything, except a row of low-rise brown stone structures and a four-lane road.

Wrong stop.

We set off walking in the direction of the right stop, we hoped, dragging our bags behind us as buses and cars whizzed past the narrow sidewalk. Just as I was settling in to a hopeless mindset of Day 1 in a new foreign city, jet-lagged, sleep-deprived and lost, I glanced to the right. There below us, a wide, swiftly moving stream flowed beneath the graceful arch of a stone bridge, draped with vines, sheltered by ancient shade trees and bordered with quaint stucco cottages.

The cottage closest to the road had a red sandstone plaque built into the wall above the lone window. In Gothic type, it read, "In accordance with the will of George Pape of Coltrbridge House, these cottages were built for the use of three poor widows in all time coming. A.D. 1894"

It was the first of what I came to think of as our Edinburgh Harry Potter moments—when the ordinary Muggle reality suddenly parted to reveal something magical. I discovered later that J.K. Rowling herself said in a 2008 speech accepting the Edinburgh Award, "Edinburgh is very much home for me and is the place where Harry evolved over seven books and many, many hours of writing in its cafes."

The city's remarkably consistent buildings of mottled brown stone blocks, the most spectacular with sharply peaked roofs and ostentatious turrets, are clear inspiration for the architecture of the Hogwarts School of Wizardry. The tombstones in the fabulously gloomy Greyfriars Kirkyard in the oldest part of the city bear the names of some key Potter characters: McGonagall, Moody and, most notably, Thomas Riddle, the birth name of Harry's nemesis, Lord Voldemort.

Tourists flock to the cafes where the then-impoorished author wrote her stories in leithland, the Elephant House, Nicholson's (now called Spoon) and the baroque gorgeous Balmoral Hotel.

But more than these, it was the city itself, its mood of hard-edge coziness and sudden revelations around unexpected corners that convinced me the more literal Potter connections.



PHOTOS BY TOM SHRODER/for The Washington Post

Above, one of the typical residential and retail streetscapes in the Scottish capital of Edinburgh, with buildings of mottled stone blocks. Below: The scenic river known as the Water of Leith runs through the city and its collection of stone buildings.



When we got to the hotel, we found an ordinary-looking, two-story stone house on the outside (which, true to form, would open as if by magic to reveal one of the most luxurious hotel rooms we'd ever stayed in). It had 12-foot ceilings, a lushly furnished sitting area looking out a big bay window, a roomy bathroom containing a claw-foot tub, and a large-screen TV embedded in an oversized mirror.

Although we'd been up for 24 hours at that point, we decided to kill the four hours until our room was ready by walking into the town center.

Edinburgh has a cheap (about \$1.50 a ride in town) and efficient bus system with frequent service to everywhere a visitor might want to go. The drivers and fellow passengers are very friendly and more than willing to explain the system and point

you to the correct stop, as well as discuss their recent doctor's appointments, the town council's foolishness and, of course, the weather.

A word about the weather: I have been in countless places where locals humbledragged about the changeability of their climate: "If you don't like it, wait 15 minutes." But Scotland is the first place I've been where that is literally true—a sky the color

of unlaundersed sweat shorts spitting a misty drizzle one moment, and a glorious northern sun cutting through great galleons of clouds the next. It can be a bit challenging as to what to wear, but the upside is a ridiculous number of rainbows.

Anyway, we didn't yet know the bus system, and we like to walk. So we did, past an unlikely streetscape including a rugby stadium, fast-food restaurants and beauty shops, then blocks of identical and repeating two-story stone townhouses, all with bay windows, balustraded rooftop terraces and phalanxes of chimneys right out of "Marry Poppins."

As we neared the center, we came to a huge plot of land surrounded by a black, wrought-iron fence. In the middle of the property loomed Downton Abbey. The Tudor building looked almost exactly like that famous fictional landmark, only bigger and grander. Turns out it was once a hospital, then a school for the deaf, and is now being transformed into high-end apartments. Queen Victoria was so impressed, contemporary accounts reported, that she jokingly offered to trade the structure for her Holyrood Palace.

But that was all a preamble. Edinburgh's center really begins at Princes Street, a high road that runs parallel to the ridge of Castle Rock, a 430-foot-high remnant of an extinct volcano with a name straight out of "Game of Thrones."

Castle Rock got its name because it has uplifted some kind of castle since the 1100s. The current one, the oldest parts of which are from the 16th century, looms atmospherically above the city and can be seen from one end of Princes Street to the other.

Between road and rock stretches a lovely 37-acre green garden that blossoms madly along a steep declivity that had once been Nor Loch—really more of a stinking moat than an actual lake—before it was drained in the middle of the 18th century.

Spanned by a series of bridges and studded with museums and monuments, the old city is a UNESCO World Heritage site and a delightful place to wander, if you don't mind mingling with thick crowds of tourists and locals taking advantage of street markets, pubs, restaurants and shops of every conceivable variety.

Seated in the valley is Waverly Station, where you can depart on clean, comfortable trains to appealing tourist destinations such as Glasgow, St. Andrews, Stirling, the Highlands and the Borders, as well as a 4½-hour fast train to London.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 31

FROM PAGE 30

It was the work of several days to visit all the obvious attractions of the city center — including a timed entry tour of the castle, which is really more of a walled city unto itself with fabulous views of the rest of Edinburgh from its outer ramparts. We gradually understood that some of the most interesting places — and most of the best restaurants — were outside the heavily touristed areas.

Not being a fan of the most notorious Scottish dish, haggis (which involves several sheep organs encased in a stomach), we found a wide range of alternative eats — cafes with rich coffee and delectable baked goods, excellent ethnic places and others with sophisticated nouveau cuisine popping up in out-of-the-way spots. Even the cafeteria in the National Gallery of Modern Art had a buffet loaded with interesting and delicious items.

We settled into a routine of slowly waking up, then walking halfway into the center to the Coates Cafe — a place of high ceilings and big windows with sofas and easy chairs to sink into as we waited for our coffee and scones — then wandering until something interesting caught our eye.

One morning we noticed a sign by the storybook riverside cottages we'd seen on our first day pointing toward something labeled Water of Leith. It turned out to be a walking path running 12 miles along a small, scenic river through the city to the port of Leith, where, among other things, the Royal Yacht Britannia was moored and open for tours. To us, the real attraction was the path, dipping down from the busy streets into a tree-shaded landscape that might have been in the deep countryside, complete with weeping willows and small waterfalls, and occasionally emerging into architecturally stunning neighborhoods dominated by buildings from the 18th and 19th centuries.

A short distance along, another path splits off up a forested hillside leading to the city's modern art museum. A mile or so beyond that, yet another path leads to the 70-acre Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, a spectacular array of specimen trees and plantings from around the world.

Some detour signs had been put up (by the fools on the town council, we were inevitably informed) where the path had been partially eroded. The signage was blithely ignored by a steady stream of locals continuing along without concern or incident.

At one point, the path climbs out of the river's little valley up a steep cobbled street into the homey neighborhood of Stockbridge, directly into the middle of a street market peddling food delicacies impossible to ignore. (We tried.)

By the end of our trip, we were thoroughly charmed. I thought back to a moment as we were checking in 10 days earlier. I had anxiously asked the hotel clerk if he thought the rain would continue all week. He looked up and smiled charmingly. "People come to Scotland for our personality," he said, "not our weather." But the truth was the weather wasn't all that bad. All you had to do was wait 15 minutes.

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WEEKEND: QUICK TRIPS

Pacific

High & dry



PHOTOS BY SETH ROBSON/Stars and Stripes

Skiers and snowboarders wait for a lift at Kagura ski resort in Niigata Prefecture, Japan. The ski area has easy access to backcountry territory, which, according to the resort's website, attracts expert riders from all over the world.

Ski resort near Tokyo known for light, deep powder

By SETH ROBSON
Stars and Stripes

It takes a while to reach the highest point of Kagura, a sprawling ski resort in mountainous Niigata Prefecture, but it's worth the journey to ride some of the lightest, deepest snow in Japan.

There are several ways to get to Kagura, but the easiest is via the Mitsumata Ropeway. You can follow expressways to its parking area in as little as two hours — three with traffic — from western Tokyo. Make sure you have snow tires or chains, because the roads are often icy near the expressway exit at Yuzawa.

There's a small shop, changing rooms, food vendors and gear rental near the parking area, but they're not easily accessible from the slopes.

Beginner skiers might want to base themselves at the Snowman Cafe at the top of the ropeway. A two-seater chairlift near the cafe has some easy, groomed runs beneath it that are a perfect spot to practice.

It doesn't take a lot of skill to head higher, via a long gondola, and check out the rest of the resort. If you're into exploring, you can follow a relatively easy route around Tashiro Lake and even as far as the nearby Naeba ski resort via the Dragondola lift, which requires a slightly more expensive pass.

There are close to a dozen res-



Snowboarder Jerry Sysourath checks out the view from the top of Kagura ski area.

taurants in the surrounding area if you get hungry along the way.

A covered quad chairlift at the top of the gondola is the spot for intermediate skiers and boarders to hone their skills. However, the prime terrain is reached by traversing from the top of the quad to another two-seater chairlift. Up there, at 6,000 feet, there's no groomed snow, just a couple of vast bowls that include open hillsides and tree runs.

The top lift is open from 9 a.m. to noon at this time of year, so it pays to leave the parking area by 8 a.m. to get a full three hours at the top.

Ski tourers can hike through a gate that leads into the backcountry. However, avalanches are a risk, so it pays to hire a guide and carry safety equipment.

Barreling under the top lift is an opportunity to show off to people riding up, but watch your head because you might clip their skis if there's enough snow.

Once that route gets tracked out, you can traverse through the woods on your left to reach an enormous open slope that takes you back down to the lift.

Perhaps the best run from the top is on the right where there's a massive powder bowl.

It's important to turn and head through a patch of trees before the last ridge, which leads into a tight creek bed. If you get stuck, plan A should be to climb back the way you came. It's possible to follow the creek bed back to another lift, but it's tough going in chest-deep snow.

Kagura's altitude makes for lighter, drier powder than most other places on mainland Japan, and if you're looking for a day trip from Tokyo, this should be your go-to area.

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KNOW & GO

DIRECTIONS

From Tokyo, take the Kanto expressway and exit at the Yuzawa interchange. Turn left and follow the road up the hill for about 5 miles until you come to the parking area on the right. Parking is free on weekdays and about 500 yen (or about \$4.40) on weekends.

TIMES

8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays;
7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekends

COSTS

A day pass costs 4,700 yen (or about \$41.50). Senior citizens and high school and junior high students get a discount. Lifts are free for ages 12 and younger.

FOOD

The Snowman Cafe serves steak and has large windows with a view of the nearby slope. Wada Goya, at the top of the gondola, serves rice and noodle dishes. A meal runs at about 1,000 yen (or about \$8.85).

INFORMATION

Website: princehotels.com/en/ski/kagura/index.html

— Seth Robson

WEEKEND: FOOD & DINING

Pacific

A Honolulu brew-pub crawl

Tips on the sips making waves in the Kakaako neighborhood of Waikiki

By WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes

Hawaii is home to big waves, but one surge was a long time in arriving: craft-beer breweries.

Until a couple of years ago, Oahu was almost bereft of the kind of craft breweries that have long saturated other American cities.

But surf's up these days, beer-wise, in the Aloha State. Nowhere is that more striking than in the Kakaako neighborhood between Waikiki Beach and downtown Honolulu. Historically the city's warehouse district, the area has long been home to auto-repair garages, machine shops and storerooms.

But those businesses are giving way to more upscale condos and trendy shops, Enter craft breweries.

Three of them are clustered in Kakaako to make for an easy and rewarding pub crawl.

I weaved through this beer circuit recently with relatives visiting from the mainland. They're into porters and stouts — the black and creamy ales that seem almost like a meal in a glass. I'm partial to India pale ales, and I judge a craft brewery by how well it produces this ale with its hallmark bitter hops.

Aloha Beer Co. has no table servers, so patrons order from the bar and find a seat inside or in patio seating that captures the feel of Oahu's ubiquitous carports. Of the 11 beers on tap, three were IPAs. I chose Manini IPA because it's a "session beer," meaning it's modest in alcohol content — 4.6 percent — so you can drink a few in one sitting and not stumble out of the joint. After all, we had other pubs to visit.

The Manini was a lighter, straw-colored IPA than is typical, and it was also dancier in taste than most. I probably would have been happier with the Cyclhops IPA, a "big, boozy and whiskey-colored" brew, according to the beer menu, but at 8.4-percent alcohol, I had to leave it for another time.

The Portlock Porter was chocolatey and bittersweet with a nice head rising like the North Shore's Pipeline wave.

A two-block walk down the street was Waikiki Brewing Co., which had a livelier, louder vibe and a waitress who loved to both banter and boast about the beer on tap. As it turned out, she had legitimate bragging rights.

Ten "regulars" were on tap, with two seasonal brews also offered. The variety was similar to Aloha: a blonde, American pale ale, brown ale and wheat beer.

The choice for my sister and brother-in-law was obvious: Black Star Molasses Porter. There must be some black magic



PHOTOS BY WYATT OLSON/Stars and Stripes

A pair of Portlock Porters stand beside a Manini India Pale Ale at Aloha Beer Co. in Honolulu.



The handmade draft taps at the Brewseum in Honolulu, where brews are named for individuals, units, vessels or events of World War II.



Beer brewing tanks at Waikiki Brewing Co.

in that black molasses because this was one stellar porter. After taking some sample sips, I was tempted to order one of these roasty, coffee-ish beers for myself.

But focus, focus ... must continue with my IPA experiments.

The Eee Pah IPA got it exactly right for my taste chart. It had a full, foamy head and an excellent blend of malt and hops. It was almost like drinking the best of a lager and best of an ale in the same swig. It was also beautiful to behold, a mix between

lacquered rosewood and fiery sunset.

Waikiki's stainless steel brewing tanks stand like glistening giants in a space just beyond the bar.

The Brewseum — again, just a couple of blocks away — is certainly the most remarkable destination of the three, though not so much for its beer.

Occupying what had once been a horse stable, the pub is an offshoot of the Home of the Brave Museum, two storefronts adjacent. Over a couple of decades, Glen Tomlinson and his family have amassed a vast collection of World War II memorabilia, artifacts, weapons, uniforms, photos and oddments, some of which now adorn the Brewseum and the museum's second-floor 1940s-era "Speakeasy" bar.

The Tomlinsons began brewing beer a few years ago in an attempt to bring in some much-needed revenue to keep afloat the museum, which has been flirting with insolvency for the past year.

They brew a dozen or so beers, each commemorating individuals, units, vessels or events of World War II. Among them are Code Talker ginger guava ale, PT 109 kolsh and John Finn golden mango, named for WWII's first Medal of Honor recipient, who survived the 1941 surprise attack on Pearl Harbor.

But with so much uncertainty about the future, brewing has slowed at the Brewseum, with only the brown ale available when we visited, although plenty of other beers were for sale.

We walked through the museum and up the staircase to the second floor, then tapped the "secret" code on the door that

KNOW & GO

THE BREW PUBS

Aloha Beer Co.

700 Queen St., Honolulu, Hawaii; (808) 544-1605; alohabeer.com. Hours: 4-11 p.m. Mondays through Saturdays; closed Sundays

Waikiki Brewing Co.

831 Queen St., Honolulu, Hawaii; (808) 591-0387; waikikibrewing.com. Hours: 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays; 11 a.m. to midnight Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays; 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. Sundays (during football season)

Brewseum

901 & 909 Waimanu St., Honolulu, Hawaii; (808) 799-2796; brewseums.com. Hours: Brewseum: 5-10 p.m. Tuesdays-Thursdays; 5-11 p.m. Fridays-Saturdays. Speakeasy: 5-8 p.m. Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays

DIRECTIONS

The brew pubs are clustered in the Kakaako district between Waikiki Beach and downtown Honolulu. Driving from Waikiki, take Ala Moana Boulevard east, then take a right onto Cooke Street for six blocks to Queen Street. Aloha Beer is to the left and Waikiki Beer is to the right. About 50 feet beyond Waikiki Beer is Kamanui Street. Take a left; the Brewseum is two blocks down. The two pubs are easily walkable to one another. Parking is limited in this neighborhood, but some metered spaces are available on Queen Street.

PRICES

Glasses of craft-brewed beer start at \$6.50

DRESS

Casual

— Wyatt Olson

we'd been given down below. We were whisked inside, where Tomlinson, wearing a WWII-era Army uniform, poured us each a Charlie Brown Ale, named for a B-17 Flying Fortress pilot who was guided home by a Luftwaffe pilot who took mercy on the lost, badly damaged plane and wound crew.

The Brewseum was our own version of a happy ending to the pub crawl.

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WEEKEND: LIFESTYLE

HOW THEY ROLL

Hipsters rediscover tabletop game Dungeons & Dragons

By SAMANTHA MELAMED
The Philadelphia Inquirer

To all appearances, Emma Aprea is a tattooed and pierced 24-year-old, a bartender and freelance photographer.

She also, despite her petite frame, happens to be “a female, tiefling barbarian: half-woman, half demon. I carry a huge green sword.”

Fortunately, the barbarian only comes out in certain contexts — namely, in one of the three different fantasy tabletop role-playing games she participates in each month. Two of those are Dungeons & Dragons, a collaborative storytelling game first published in 1974, decades before Aprea was born.

“The stigma of D&D is that you’re a hardcore closet nerd; you don’t even see the sunlight,” Aprea said. “But not all nerds are that way. As people evolve, this is getting to be less stigmatized because it’s fun to come out and drink and be social, but also get to play a game. There’s a level of community to it.”

That evolution is already well underway: Dungeons & Dragons has, against long odds, recently become something vaguely resembling cool. Regular games are popping up in bars and coffee shops, and in people’s homes across Philadelphia and its suburbs. They’re

being documented in podcasts and recorded on YouTube or Twitch, in some cases drawing thousands of viewers. The trend, which has also percolated around the country, has even fueled kids’ camps and pop-up gaming cafes.

At Redcap’s Corner in Powelton Village, Pa., events manager Kris Zwack said the Thursday D&D nights have been drawing strong crowds.

“We’ve been regularly selling out of new printings of the latest D&D expansion books, like ‘Xanathar’s Guide to Everything,’” she said.

Fans attribute the resurgence in part to improvements in the game itself. D&D — which offers a structure for characters from orcs to dragons to play out different scenarios guided by rolls of the dice — is on its fifth edition; Zwack said many of her customers had dropped out of the game over the years, but are now returning.

“It’s not nearly as complicated as it used to be. You don’t need a Ph.D. in Dungeons & Dragons,” agreed Brian Bolles, 33, a bar manager and avid player. “The last version of the game was kind of confused in its complexity.”

It’s come a long way since the 1980s, when a moral panic surrounding D&D was triggered in part by the suicide of a teenager who had been an avid player.

Today, it’s seen as a relatively wholesome

pastime, and even a way to draw out autistic children in social settings.

“I started playing around the end of the Satanic Panic, so it was the devil’s game and all that,” said Zach Ares-Deterding, now 37. “Then, in high school, we played as part of the drama club. When I got to college, that was the first time I encountered the stereotype of the sweaty, greasy dude with the neck beard and Motorhead T-shirt. I was like: Wait, am I a nerd? But now, it’s getting more socially acceptable.”

He cites the infiltration of D&D into the media, such as in the Netflix series “Stranger Things,” and seeing D&D ads in men’s magazines, like GQ and Maxim. Now, the father of a toddler plays a monthly game at a bar, and hosts another one, biweekly, at his house. “The game we run at my house is more like a day care,” he said. “We have three people that come over with toddlers and take turns watching babies.”

Some of those players are brand new to the game. For many, it’s an inviting alternative to the lonelier pastime of video gaming.

Will Calligan, 28, said that’s what drew him. “I’ve played video games my whole life, but I only got into tabletop (role-playing games) around college. I enjoy the aspect of community. It’s like a collaborative brainstorming session.”

He’s even developed a live-play podcast The Plane Shift, inspired by the success of other shows based on D&D campaigns. One, called Adventure Zone, is produced by Maximum Fun, which makes Bullseye, heard on NPR stations, and the popular comedy podcast Judge John Hodgman.

Helping drive the trend are events like Drinks & Dragons, a game night that runs monthly at two South Philadelphia bars: the Black Cat Tavern on 12th and American and Sardine Bar. (House rules include a shot of Heaven Hill, “the table quaff,” that can be consumed for a mulligan.)

Don Caraco, 43, who started the series in 2016, said he first pitched it five years ago. “It was shot down. The restaurant manager at the time was like, ‘D&D? That’s for geeks.’” Now, the game draws about 20 or 30 players on a given night. Standing in front of a large piece of graph paper scattered with figurines and heaps of dice, Caraco said it’s more popular than even he realized. “It seems like weekly I run into somebody new who’s like, ‘I do this all the time.’”

Players relish the chance to be dramatic, creative and silly. Overheard at Drinks & Dragons on a recent night:

“I am the beer pong champion of my village!”

“OK, I’m going to turn into a giant lizard.” (This, spoken by a character who’d previously been just a moderately sized lizard.)

“He hits you, for five points of bludgeon damage.”

There were zombie attacks to fend off, a mysterious tomb to explore, an unexplained illness to diagnose, bloody snow angels to make in the corpse of a deceased much monster.

Jeff Waterman, 32, had played in high school and returned to the game over the past year. “The idealistic part of me says, as we get more attached to screens, we want to do things that are imaginative and where we talk to humans,” Waterman said. “Everything is so high tech and online now, people see this very old game, and they think it’s something new.”

“The idealistic part of me says, as we get more attached to screens, we want to do things that are imaginative and where we talk to humans. Everything is so high tech and online now, people see this very old game, and they think it’s something new.”



PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER/TNS

People play Dungeons & Dragons at the Black Cat Tavern in Philadelphia, Pa., in November 2017.

WEEKEND: BOOKS

Love after loss

Dying memoirists wrote books about their final days.
Then their spouses became a couple.

By NORA KRUG
The Washington Post

The literary pairing was inevitable. “When Breath Becomes Air,” Paul Kalanithi’s memoir of his final years as he faced lung cancer at age 37, was published posthumously, in 2016, to critical acclaim and commercial success. “The Bright Hour,” Nina Riggs’ memoir of her final years as she faced breast cancer at age 39, was published posthumously, in 2017, to critical acclaim and commercial success. The two books were mentioned together in numerous reviews, lists and conversations.

Less inevitable was that the late authors’ spouses would end up together, too.

“I’m still surprised,” said Lucy Kalanithi of her relationship with Nina Riggs’ widower, John Duberstein. “I’m surprised by how ridiculous it is and how natural it is at the same time.”

Sitting across the kitchen table from Lucy recently at her home, John agreed. “Everything seemed almost bizarrely to fit,” he said. “It was kind of stunning.”

The story of Lucy Kalanithi and John Duberstein is both unlikely and destined, the stuff of a rom-com. It begins, tragically, on a deathbed.

In her final days, Nina Riggs was worried about her husband and how he would get on with his life when she was gone. Nina made an offhand suggestion: Contact Lucy Kalanithi. She has experience with this, she told him; she’ll know what to do. At the time, John had only a vague idea who Lucy was. He had yet to finish “When Breath Becomes Air.”

Lucy and Nina, however, had formed a quiet relationship. Lucy, whose husband died in 2015, had contacted Nina after reading a Modern Love column she had written for the New York Times, “When a Couch is More Than a Couch.” Lucy wrote a glowing blurb for “The Bright Hour” and stayed in touch with Nina’s agent, inquiring about Nina’s health and her family.

On Feb. 24, two days before Nina died, Lucy sent her an email message: “I’m beaming you love from my whole being.” She signed it, “your forever fan, Lucy.”

At a hospice in Greensboro, N.C., John read the email to his ailing wife and responded on her behalf. “Thank you for being such a strong supporter and friend to her,” he said. “She’s talked about you a ton these past few weeks, and her sense of you being a person with great insight and empathy. She’s clearly on the mark there.” One of Nina’s final acts, in effect, was to play matchmaker for her husband.

John, a 41-year-old lawyer, was unmoored by his wife’s death. “I had so many questions,” he said. “I was bursting with this intense need to get things squared.” So he did as his wife had suggested.

His note to Lucy — two days after Nina died — was lengthy and, in Lucy’s words, “obscenely vulnerable.” His requests for advice were wide-ranging: How do I write an eulogy? How do I sleep through the night? How do I not go insane?

Lucy wrote back immediately, advising John to focus on the eulogy and “to take a chill pill” about the rest. “I felt a desire to support their family,” she says. “And Nina



AMY OSBORNE/for The Washington Post

John Duberstein and Lucy Kalanithi met and fell in love after their respective spouses wrote memoirs about their terminal illnesses.

was John’s character reference.” John got through the eulogy. He got through the next day. But not without emailing Lucy. Over the next few weeks and months, she became his lifeline — and, in turn, he helped her realize that she had come a long way in the two years since her husband’s death. “I felt like your guardian,” she said. “You totally were,” he said.

“The Bright Hour: A Memoir of Living and Dying,” by Nina Riggs

The emails grew in volume and intensity. “We learned that when a gmail thread reaches 100, it rolls you into another thread,” he said. There were spoils and spoils of threads, “a Google-plex” of messages, he joked.

Their feelings for one another took on new shape. “We

talked a lot about the minefield of managing to fall in love and actively grieve at the same

“When Breath Becomes Air,” by Paul Kalanithi

time,” she said.

There were also lighter, more flirtatious exchanges. They gossiped about the private Facebook group, Hot Young Widows Club, and shared poetry.

In April, Lucy, who is 38 and a clinical assistant professor of medicine at Stanford, had a business trip to Raleigh, N.C., about an hour from John’s home. “I knew I had to see her,” he said. Lucy felt the same way.

At the time, the two had never spoken — they had made an email-only rule. Seeing each other face to face was intense. “We held each other a long time,” she said. There were two dinner dates and, by both accounts, “a lot of chemistry.” Kalanithi then returned to California.

Their relationship was blossoming but mostly a secret. John’s children — Freddy, 10, and Benny, 8 — knew about it, as did Lucy’s 3-year-old daughter, Cady. Nina’s publisher had arranged a dual publicity tour in June for John and Lucy — given the common theme of “When Breath Becomes Air” and “The Bright Hour.” Lucy and John were terrified and excited to be on stage together. At one engagement — a Facebook live event in Sausalito, Calif. — interviewer Kelly Corrigan jokingly asked when John and Lucy might get engaged. “John turned purple,” Lucy recalled.

By the end of the summer, the couple had begun to speak openly about the relationship to their extended family and friends. There were sweet photos shared on Facebook. The families got together regularly — though the arrangements are difficult, with three children, two jobs and a continent between them.

As the kids played in the yard in California recently, John and Lucy bantered over which house is more child-friendly, which has more bedrooms, which climate is better. “We need to find a place in the middle and move there,” Lucy said. They joked about writing a sequel to their late spouses’ books: “When Breath Becomes the Bright Hour.”

At Lucy’s home, reminders of their late spouses remain. There are photos of Paul in the kitchen and along the hallway; on the refrigerator is a Christmas card of the Duberstein family, including Nina. In an odd coincidence, Lucy owns the same couch Nina featured in her column.

In person and on the page, Nina and Paul gave their spouses “radical permission,” Lucy Kalanithi said, to enter new relationships, even to remarry. Following through on that brings up complicated emotions.

“I planned to spend my entire life with Nina. I was 100 percent happy doing that,” Duberstein said. Her death forced him onto another course. “Having a second relationship is a tragedy,” he said. But he acknowledges with deep gratitude the series of fortunate events that have led him to Lucy — a woman his wife had tacitly approved. “I don’t think John ever forgave the lingering pain and inevitable challenges they face. Entering into a relationship, Lucy noted, means accepting the possibility of losing your partner. “If you are lucky enough,” she said, “you will be devastated when they die. Willingly entering that feels gutsy, but what else could you choose?”

For now, they are relishing their time together, in all its complexity.

WEEKEND: VIDEO GAMES

BY OZZIE MEJIA
Shacknews.com

Publisher Double Fine and developer Boneloaf have been hard at work on "Gang Beasts" for years. If it feels like it's been forever since it's been on Steam Early Access, that's because it first arrived there more than three years ago. It's slightly stunning to realize that the game's 1.0 version is just now touching down.

So how is Boneloaf's brawler after more than three years? Remember the wild moments with friends, the bonkers physics and the spontaneous bouts of laughter that came from some of those outlandish physics? Those are still there, in spades, but the laughter isn't always enough to drown out some of "Gang Beasts'" lingering issues.

"Gang Beasts" operates on the simplest of premises. Multiple players (four locally, eight online) get together for a massive brawl, with the idea to remove any opposition from the fighting area to win. All of those players are gelatinous two-legged creatures, with the physics to match. That means that for the first few games, players will likely wrestle with the controls and the physics more than with their opponents.

"Gang Beasts" is a game that has a noticeable learning curve. Buttons control individual limbs, while other buttons are tied to actions like kicks, headbutts and throws. Actually performing any of these moves requires holding the buttons down or combining button presses and holds in such a way as to make these moves happen. Offense often won't go as intended, but that's part of the game's charm.

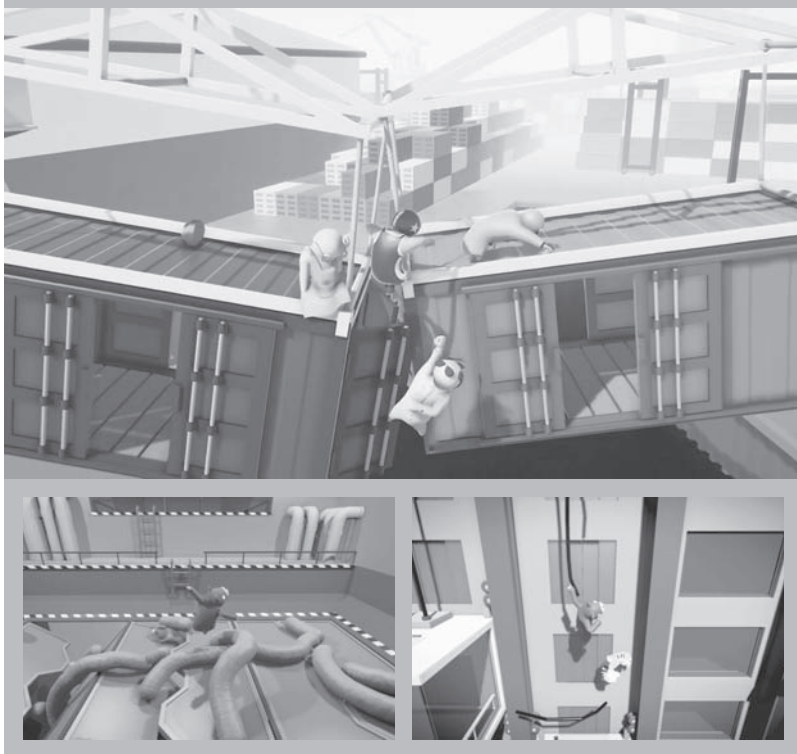
"Gang Beasts" isn't about precision fighting. It's about flat-out chaos and seeing what happens when everyone just piles on each other, knocking each other prone with big headbutts and trying to push each other to the edge of the map. It's about setbacks, often of your own making, and making the most of it. It's more of a slapstick-style party than any kind of serious fighting game.

A big part of the reason that the "Gang Beasts" formula works is because of the large variety of stages. There's a factory filled with meat grinders, a gondola along the side of a high-rise building, a series of moving trucks, and an airborne blimp, just to name a few. Each stage is unique, some even coming with distinct win conditions, like the Subway stage that requires tossing opponents in front of a moving train.

While the stages offer their own haz-

A ROYAL FUMBLE

Laughter can't drown out lingering issues in 'Gang Beasts'



ards, the other thing to note is that those hazards will often include the game's physics. It's hard enough to move around as a gelatinous biped, but certain objects will react with those same kinds of properties. The aforementioned gondola, for example, makes traversing the precariously placed wood planks a major hazard, since they'll often just fall to the side under the weight of the fighters.

It's a good thing "Gang Beasts" is good for so many laughs, because the rest of the package doesn't quite hold up. While it's fine for the gameplay to be simplistic, the user interface should look a little better than the bare-bones menus that are presented. It looks basic in the worst kind of way, with hard-to-read text and almost nothing in the way of options for customizing games or controls.

There are also a couple of other game modes, but they don't quite hold up to the core Melee mode. Gang mode pits teams against one another, while Waves is more about taking on increasingly difficult AI opponents. There's also a Football mode that's good for a couple of laughs, but nothing that's going to divert away from Melee, either locally or online.

Speaking of which, unless there's a full house and a lot of controllers, players will want to take the battle online more often than not. The trouble right now is that online has a lot of issues. A handful of my online sessions had trouble keeping everyone connected. Of the games that did connect, there were noticeable graphic glitches, several instances of controllers warping around, and a lot of lag.

Beyond the core multiplayer battles,

"Gang Beasts" has little else to offer. There's almost nothing for solo players to truly sink their teeth into for an extended period, and local multiplayer starts to get old after a while without the ability to add bots. That only leaves online play as the best way to experience "Gang Beasts" as it should be played, but playing online is a rocky prospect at the moment.


At its core, "Gang Beasts" is a lot of fun. Between its wacky physics, creative level design and copious amounts of character customization options, there's a lot here for groups of friends to enjoy. If the online element pulls itself together, there's enough reason to keep coming back for a few occasional matches and some new laughs. It's worth a try, because the laughs I did have while playing this have been priceless.

Online: gangbeasts.gang

"Gang Beasts" is a silly multiplayer party game with hostile gelatinous characters fighting in the hazardous streets of Beef City.

Photos courtesy of Boneloaf Limited

WEEKEND: MUSIC



Timberlake's single 'Filthy' isn't very outdoorsy

Well, this is unexpected. When Justin Timberlake announced Jan. 2 that he had completed a new album, he did it with an over-the-top video that shows him running with horses and kneeling in a frozen field.

"It feels like mountains, trees, campfires," we hear Timberlake's wife, Jessica Biel, say about "Man of the Woods," due Feb. 2, two days before the pop singer headlines the Super Bowl halftime show.

The idea appeared to be a deeply self-conscious return to roots—that after the polished digital textures of 2013's "The 20/20 Experience" (whose cover had him wearing a tuxedo), Timberlake is taking up the down-home fundamentals of his native Tennessee.

Yet that's not quite what happens in "Filthy," the new album's surprising lead single, which came out Jan. 5 along with a new video.

Produced by Timberlake and his old pals Timbaland and Danja, "Filthy" is a throbbing, proudly raunchy electro-funk track that has Timberlake begging somebody to put her dirty hands all over his body.

"What you gonna do with all that meat?" he asks, and making jerky to enjoy on a hike isn't what he seems to have in mind.

Timberlake moves even further from the anticipated outdoorsy concept in the music video for "Filthy," in which he plays a Steve Jobs-like tech maven who unveils a dancing robot at the Pan-Asian Deep Learning Conference (as a title card has it).

But perhaps our dude still has a country tune up his organic-flannel sleeve: On Twitter, Timberlake suggested that "Filthy" is the first of four songs he'll release before "Man of the Woods" finally comes out.

—Mikael Wood
Los Angeles Times

Justin Timberlake's new album, "Man of the Woods," is due Feb. 2.

TNS photo



REVIEW

Charli XCX looks to the future

Charli XCX has already exerted her influence on the sound of pop music.

The co-writer of Iggy Azalea's "Fancy" and Icona Pop's "I Love It," Charli, who scored her own hit with "Boom Clap," likes combining exuberant, synthesizer-filled dance music with simple, memorable choruses and a bit of hip-hop swagger. On her new mixtape "Pop 2," Charli and her pals, especially PC Music's A.G. Cook, craft a future where that combination could rule the airwaves.

Because "Pop 2" is a mixtape rather than an official album, Charli can simply focus on the songs rather than worrying about whether the album also serves as a proper star vehicle for her blossoming career.

That means Tove Lo takes the lead in the catchy "Out of My Head," with Charli not appearing until the second verse. It means she pretty much shares the gorgeous "Backseat" equally with Carly Rae Jepsen, disguising her own vocals in layers of Auto-Tune, while pushing Jepsen's breathy vocals up in the mix.

And, most importantly, it means that Charli can take chances that she might not if the stakes were higher. It's fun to hear her offer her twist on the Migos vibe with her own crew, including




Charli XCX
Pop 2 (Atlantic)

ingly built mostly out of manipulated versions of stacks of her voice, and the lush "Tears," which could make a run on radio right now, are both moving and memorable, a side of good-time Charli we don't get to see very often.

"Pop 2" shows what could be possible if radio was less uptight and more willing to experiment, something Charli XCX has quickly mastered.

—Glenn Gamboa
Newsday

Photos courtesy of Atlantic Records



Change is in the air for the new year

Some things we can say with certainty about pop music in 2018: Taylor Swift's stadium tour will do gangbusters. The Grammys will get at least one major category wrong. Plenty also seems up for grabs at a moment when the next viral hit can come from anywhere.

TREND

With digital streaming now steering the record business, artists are reassessing how best to present their work. For Frank Ocean, that meant releasing a series of singles in 2017 rather than a complete album; for Drake, it meant calling "More Life" a "playlist" as a way to justify his stylistic dabbling. That experimentation is sure to spread in 2018, especially as platforms like Spotify roll out increasingly sophisticated interface options that allow acts to complement their songs with videos, images and text.

BREAKOUT

Boy bands threatened to come back in a big way in 2017, with welcome diversity in their ranks—see BTS from South Korea and Latin pop's CNCO. But none of these new dream teams has scored a major Top 40 radio hit to rival the old classics by N*SYNC and the Backstreet Boys. Look for Pretymuch to get that done. Assembled by Simon Cowell (who put together One Direction), this L.A.-based quintet has a tighter-than-usual grasp on the sound of current pop; its songs showcase the requisite boy-band vocal harmonies but also use squelching synths and skittering trap beats. Pretymuch's social-media savvy means radio programmers can resist them for only so long.

PREDICTION

The runaway success of "Despacito"—specifically its remix featuring Justin Bieber—didn't just bring overdue shine to the song's veteran creators, Luis Fonsi and Daddy Yankee. It also lit a fuse among American record executives to engineer the next Latin pop crossover smash. Expect to hear plenty of English-speaking singers sharpening their Spanish to jump on records by the likes of Ozuna, Bad Bunny, Daddy Yankee and Romeo Santos.

—Mikael Wood
Los Angeles Times

WEEKEND: MUSIC & TELEVISION



GOLDEN YEARS

HBO's new Bowie documentary compellingly reflects on the final projects of the artist's life

By ROBERT LLOYD
Los Angeles Times

"Doctor Who" may have got its global premieres synchronized, but it took a year for "David Bowie: The Last Five Years," a film about Britain's other great cultural spaceman, to make it to the United States. Francis Whately's film, which premiered in the U.K. in January 2017, came to HBO on Monday on what would have been the singer's 71st birthday and two days before the second anniversary of his death from liver cancer.

Not much has changed in that time, of course, at least as concerns us here. Bowie still feels essential, necessary and oddly present — a useful example, the global legend as inspirational outsider. This is briefly a sad story — he dies in the end — but it isn't a tragic one.

Five years, as fans will know, is the number of years left to the world in Bowie's song "Five Years." (Halfway through the documentary, the song appears in a splendid 1976 performance from "The Dinah Shore Show.") And it's the distance from 2011, when Bowie secretly went to work on a new album, eventually titled "The Next Day," to 2016, when he died, having produced another new album, "Blackstar," released on his final earthly birthday, and an off-Broadway musical, "Lazarus."

Whately, who made the 2013 Bowie documentary "Five Years" (on five key, nonconsecutive years in the artist's career), marshals pretty much the full cast of Bowie's late-career collaborators, including band members, designers, video directors and the "Lazarus" creative team. Producer Tony Visconti, who worked with Bowie on and off from his first album to his last (and was a member of Bowie's pre-Ziggy costume band, Hype, whose gear anticipated the Village People more than it did the Spiders from Mars), is present at a mixing board, isolating vocals, analyzing parts and remembering a friend.

If you are unfamiliar with the final, fertile phase of Bowie's career — which followed his retirement from performing, after a 2004 onstage heart attack — this is a fine introduction. If

you know the period, there are many odd delights: goofy tour-stop footage, behind-the-scenes glimpses of videos in production, a good taste of

"Lazarus" in rehearsal on stage, tales of genial collaboration, and lots of music. The continuing theme of the film is that fame isn't all it's cracked up to be ("I'm much more interested in the process of life," Bowie says, "the celebrity side of it, I couldn't give a sausage"), but that work can be rewarding.

The focus is almost entirely on the work. Although Bowie did not hide himself away, he was a successfully private person who managed to keep his terminal illness a secret even from the musicians with whom he was recording. (There is perhaps one shot of Bowie with Iman, whom he married in 1992, and a single sidelong mention of their daughter, Alexandria, born in 2000.) If little of the information here will be new to fans, the making of "The Next Day" and "Blackstar" having been much documented after their release, it's a treat to see the musicians who made them performing live to Bowie's vocal tracks — as close to a concert as history will allow.

There were better and worse albums over half a century, stumbles and recoveries, failed experiments and brilliant new forms. ("Blackstar," made with New York avant-garde jazz musicians, was especially exciting.) There was looking backward, but mostly to move forward — Bowie was always folding who he'd been into who he'd be, remaking old material in new voices — and "The Last Five Years," title notwithstanding, moves back and forth along a longer timeline, beginning when the singer was still using his given name, David Jones. Which of the Bowies we see was the "real" one, if any were, was beside the point; creating characters was always part of the game; change was a constant.

"Always go a little further into the water than you feel you're capable of being, go a little bit out of your depth, and when you don't feel that your feet are quite touching the bottom you're just about in the right place to do something exciting," says the artist.

This attitude kept him interesting when most of his peers had grown content to live off the successes of their youth. It's what made him appealing to successive new generations — that and what comes across as a genuine mix of intelligence, ambition, charm, humor, modesty, generosity, borderless sex appeal, good looks and youthfulness.

"He did seem that he had the gift from the gods," guitarist Gerry Leonard says here, "that he was never going to get old." He did and he didn't, but in either case, Bowie made the most of it.

Photo courtesy of Nasty Little Man

WEEKEND: TELEVISION & DVD



WARNER BROS. PICTURES/AP

Bill Skarsgard stars in "It." The horror flick is now available on DVD.

NEW ON DVD

"It." Those who have not read the Stephen King book or seen the miniseries will find "It" to be a creepy fear factory running on the energy of Bill Skarsgard as Pennywise. Without the work of Tim Curry as a comparison, Skarsgard's performance stands out because of the brilliant blend of comedy, horror and psychological manipulation that makes this clown as memorable as the first encounter with Jason or Freddie.

Without any background from the book, there's no anticipation of the story becoming a psychological study of how scarred young people can be when the stuff of their most terrifying nightmares come to life. Focusing on the youngsters filters out all of the deeper meaning in the way Pennywise terrorizes the group and reduces the film to a rather generic horror movie. It's a very good generic horror film as long as there are no comparisons between the book and the movie.

"The Tiger Hunter": What writer Sameer Khan Gardez and director/co-writer Lena Khan have written is the story of Sami Malik (Danny Pudi), a young engineering student from India, who decides to leave his home, family and the girl he secretly loves (Karen David) to find success in America. Part of his decision to leave is he feels like he can no longer live in the shadow of his father, a man heralded for his prowess at tracking and killing tigers. It falls to Pudi to pull the elements together. He's a decent actor, but he just doesn't fill out the big-screen demands of being a stranger in a strange land, a charming suitor, the straight man for all of his fellow actors or as a son looking for respect. This role called for someone with a lot more energy.

"The Foreigner": Jackie Chan and Pierce Brosnan star in the action thriller from Martin Campbell, the director of "Casino Royale." The film tells the story of London businessman Quan (Chan), whose past erupts in a revenge-fueled vendetta when the only person he loves is taken from him in a senseless act of politically-motivated terrorism. In his relentless search for the identity of the terrorists, Quan wages war with a British government official (Brosnan), whose own past may hold clues to the identities of the elusive killers. The film works because Campbell knows how to get the most out of the 63-year-old Chan. He mixes in enough action sequences to let Chan do what he does best while also giving Chan a rare opportunity. He gets to act more in this offering than the majority of his past work.

Also available on DVD:

"Bad Day for the Cut": Farmer becomes a vigilante on a bloody quest to avenge his mother's murder.

"Friend Request": Approval of a friend request on Facebook becomes deadly.

"Marshall": Thurgood Marshall is called in to handle what would become one of the most important court cases in history. Chadwick Boseman stars.

"Mark Felt: The Man Who Brought Down the White House": Liam Neeson stars in the story of the man who became known as Deep Throat.

—Rick Bentley/TNS

The long way

Scott Foley's taken quite the journey to get to 'Scandal'

By LUANNE LEE
Tribune News Service

Actor Scott Foley knew he wanted to be an actor all his life. But he spent part of his teens ruining his chances.

His mother died when he was 15, and he dropped out of school and drifted. "When you lose a parent at a formative age like your teens, you're acting out anyway, but when that happens, there's anger and confusion," he says in a sunlit hotel room. "I remember drinking. I got arrested once for possession of alcohol."

But rescue arrived from an unexpected source. "One of my friends' father and mother pulled me aside after a couple months of me drifting around, and they said, 'What are you doing?' I said, 'What do you mean? I'm not going to school. I'm going to figure it out.'"

"They said, 'Don't be an idiot. You're going to come live with us. You're going to go to high school, and we'll take care of you.' I think when these friends of mine said 'we'll take care of you,' that showed me a compassion I'd never known before."

Though they already had four children, they became Foley's legal guardians and through them, he graduated. "I was very fortunate," he said.

Though he has traveled a bumpy road to be an actor, Foley is taking on one of his best roles yet. He's portraying the real-life Green Beret surgeon, Jeffrey MacDonald, who was convicted of murdering his pregnant wife and two children in "Final Vision," airing on On Demand and Investigation Discovery Go. Viewers also know Foley from his role as the naval consort on "Scandal," which returns to ABC on Jan. 18, and as the hunky leading man on "Felicity."

Foley was 18 when he headed off for Los Angeles to become an actor. "Not knowing anybody, and not knowing anything about Los Angeles," he says. "I remember going to the St. Louis county public library — obviously before the internet — and just knowing that 'The Tonight Show' taped in Burbank. I got a Burbank phone book and looked up a hotel to stay in. And that's how I got my first hotel. I bought a one-way ticket out here and took a shuttle from the airport to Burbank. I didn't know where to go, didn't know what to do."

He says he gradually acclimated. "You meet one person. You find one job, and they introduce you to someone else, and you say you're an actor — and everybody's an actor out here — and they say, 'Well, I know an agent' or 'I know an acting class.' You get in an acting class with other actors and you network."

It sounds easy. But it took Foley six years to land a paying job as an actor. His first role was on "Sweet Valley High," and he rode the bus to the audition because he didn't have a car for several years.

"I made 230 bucks for that episode and quit my job waiting tables and thought, 'This is it!' Little did I know it'd be another four years before I got another acting job. I lived in what was called a sleeping room. There were 19 of these rooms in the back of an apartment complex and each room came with a twin bed, a small closet and a side table. Bathroom was down the hall — two bathrooms for 19 rooms, and it was \$190 a month in Hollywood."

He landed a job selling insur-

ance and was able to walk to work. Chuckling, he says, "I didn't know a thing about selling insurance. But those are the days that give you the character and the fortitude to really decide is this what I want to do? Because you really gotta stick it out."

At one point he decided not to stick it out. "Christmas was coming up, and a relative I'd never met sent me a check for Christmas, \$2,500. This was 1992, and I think I had \$20 to my name. I thought, '\$2,500 — that's amazing!' So I packed up all my stuff and bought a ticket to the Virgin Islands to St. John and was going to go live the island life. I was going to tend bar or do something, but live on an island. It's always been a dream of mine."

He planned to camp on the beach until he found a job. But when he arrived, the campsites were full and he blew half of the \$400 he had left for a hotel room for one night. He was forced to bivouac in the national park, which was illegal. And the donkeys that had once served the now-defunct sugar plantations ate the strings to his tent, so it would no longer stand.

In desperation, he phoned his father. I said, 'Dad, I'm homeless. I'm in St. John. I'll do whatever you want. I'll come back to St. Louis, I'll go to college.' He said, 'Are you kidding me? You're not coming home; go back to L.A. I'll buy you a ticket.' So I went back to L.A. And it's the best thing he ever did for me. That's the only time I wanted to quit."

Foley has been married to his second wife, actress Marketa Dominiczak (his first wife was actress Jennifer Garner), for 10 years. He's the father of three children, a daughter, 8, and sons, 5 and 3.

"Scandal" stars Scott Foley as Jake Ballard. The show returns to AFN-Spectrum on Jan. 19.

ABC



WEEKEND: HEALTH & FITNESS

9Round fitness offers 30 minute kickboxing-themed workouts in a convenient circuit format.

PHOTO COURTESY OF 9ROUND/AP



BY KELLI KENNEDY
Associated Press

Hot workouts

Rowing, rebounders and boxing are among the top fitness trends of 2018

If you skipped most of your workouts to be more “present” during the holiday festivities and aren’t looking forward to getting back on the treadmill, we feel you. We rounded up some of the workouts that have fitness fans talking to keep you motivated. Do them at home, in the studio, on a trampoline or a lake (gasp) — whatever it takes to get moving.

If you love working out at home

There are tons of amazing streaming options out there, and the new offering from Miami’s SLT star Bethany C. Meyers is worth checking out: he.com is a music-driven mash-up of low-impact yoga, Pilates and strength training. Best of all, it doesn’t require any equipment, and the body-positive message and focus on becoming the best, strongest you is super motivating. Also worth a look: Anna Kaiser’s streaming service AKT On Demand, which offers 55 videos ranging from 10 to 90 minutes and includes everything from her popular dance cardio to signature strength-training moves that have made her popular among celeb clients Kelly Ripa and Shakira.

If you love high-intensity interval training and the competition of Orangetheory

Miami’s Spartan Gym focus is like a playground for gym rats. Classes include circuit training, obstacle courses and race training to build athleticism, strength, endurance and mental acuity. Think overhead ropes, nets and pipes for traditional Spartan course training. Or unleash your inner athlete at New York’s Tone House where sessions are team-oriented, competitive and fun. The goal is to bring sports conditioning workouts to the mainstream. Think moves like battle ropes, squat jumps and bear crawls. Around the country, check out the race training classes at Obstacle Academy in Edina, Minn., the Spartan SGX class at Urban Fit in Hartsfield, Pa., or Life Time gyms for their Spartan Strong classes.

If you hate the treadmill and elliptical

Stop overlooking one of the most forgotten pieces of gym equipment. This year is all about rowing workouts, and boutique studios are popping up everywhere. Don’t worry, it’s not like spinning where you’re on the rower for a boring 45 minutes. Many of the classes mix up rowing intervals with strength and ab conditioning for a high-intensity, low-impact punch like cardio and core class at New York’s CityRow. At EngineRM in New York, the focus is on rowing in unison as a group guided by the coxswain. LIT method relies on rowing machines to boost your heart rate in their high-intensity, low-impact classes in Los Angeles. LA’s iRow studio is all about hard-core rowing in group classes or training on the water in Marina Del Rey. Also worth noting are Ro Fitness in Austin and weRow in Minneapolis. Another option: Just start mixing in 10-minute intervals on the rowing machine at your gym during your normal workout.

If you like boxing

Supermodel Gigi Hadid is always gushing about her boxing workouts at Gotham Gym in New York. Enough said. Boxing workouts have followed the ebb and flow of most fitness fads and are having a big moment now with studios for everyone. HotBox in Nashville offers group classes in a heated room with your own bag and gloves and a killer playlist. In New York, there’s Church Street Boxing, Shadowbox, Overthrow Boxing Club and Work Train Fight. In Los Angeles, try Gloveworx, Trinity Boxing Club or Box ‘N Burn. 9Round gets it done in just 30 minutes with 600 locations around the country, and chances are, most YMCAs or fitness clubs are offering a few sparring classes, too.

If you dread cardio

It’s easy to see why trampoline or rebounder workouts are all the rage. It’s low impact and gentle on your joints, but offers the heart-pumping cardio benefits of a hard run. It’s great for improving balance, and most importantly, it’s fun! Mini trampolines are relatively inexpensive (you can buy one from celeb trainer Tracy Anderson for \$70) and there are tons of online workouts to get you started. Anderson’s 50-minute workout (available online or on DVD) is half muscular structure followed by 25 minutes of dance cardio performed on the rebounder. Or if you can’t take in-person classes with Simone de la Rue of Body By Simone in Los Angeles, try her DVD, which includes three trampoline dance routines to target the upper body, lower body and core.

If you like yoga

As the fitness scene has focused more on upping the intensity ante, there’s been a counter movement that’s all about active rest and recovery. Beyond just sitting on the couch watching Netflix, these classes are focused on yin yoga, gentle stretching, dim lights, self-massage, foam rolling and aromatherapy. Namaste. Crunch Gym’s newest class is Hair of the Down Dog: Detox Yoga to help you recover from late-night partying or too many burpees. Equinox doubled down on restorative classes with stretch essentials and athletic stretch classes that includes guided self-massage and flexibility training for better range of motion. In Dallas, Foam Roller Fitness is all about rolling out your troubles. At New York’s Mile High Run Club recovery room, you can book stretch sessions, reflexology and acupuncture or spend some time in their compression boots or playing with the Hyperice recovery tools. At Naam Yoga’s aromatherapy class in New York, students put the essence of plants on specific body points to help restore harmony and wellness.

WEEKEND: FAMILY



JOE BURBANK, ORLANDO SENTINEL/TNS

Erica Bonn carries a favorite painting into her new apartment at Quest Village, an independent-living community for adults with developmental disabilities in east Orlando, Fla.

A place of their own

Adults with developmental disabilities find independence in special village

By KATE SANTICH
Orlando Sentinel

Jill Bonn nervously helped her only child box up her belongings in late December as the young woman prepared to move from the family's Longwood, Fla., home into her own one-bedroom apartment in Orlando.

"I've been having anxiety since before Christmas," Bonn said. "And now that we're packing, it's like, 'Oh, God this is happening.' I'll call her, but she probably won't answer me. She might answer a text if I'm lucky."

Though Bonn's daughter, Erica, is 27, such a leap wasn't always a certainty. Erica has Asperger's syndrome, a high-functioning form of autism.

Her new home is Quest Village — 48 one-bedroom, one-bath cottage-style apartments designed strictly for adults with developmental disabilities capable of living on their own. The affordable housing project is the first of its kind in metro Orlando, and there are only four similar developments throughout the state, all opened within the past two years.

Though each complex operates a little differently, Quest Village residents are largely independent, with a range of fee-for-service options that can help them with housekeeping, personal hygiene, meal planning, transportation and handling prescriptions.

The services range from \$200 to \$2,400 a month on top of the sliding-scale rent of \$379 to \$597 a month, though some residents don't require any help and others will need it only in the beginning.

"Most of the other projects in

the state have on-site food service and on-site planned activities throughout the day," said John Gill, president and CEO of Quest, Inc., an Orlando-based nonprofit that helps people with developmental disabilities learn, work, live and socialize. "Ours is more like a traditional apartment complex, but we will have coaching and support staff on site," including at least one staff member who stays around the clock.

It's not a solution for everyone, and some parents who thought their adult children were capable have been turned away after screening. Applicants must pass a two- to three-hour evaluation in which they're asked to demonstrate the ability to perform simple chores and make sound decisions, ensuring they can live with limited oversight.

Affordable housing options for people with developmental disabilities are rare, and Gill expects the apartments to rent quickly, given growing demand. Sixteen units filled during the first two weeks in December.

The 5-acre, \$12-million village is within walking distance of bus stops, retail shopping, health care and movie theaters. It features an expansive, upscale clubhouse with big-screen TVs, a full kitchen, game room, gym and computer stations with Wi-Fi.

Outside, there's a garden, a basketball court and an exercise path. Each 750-square-foot apartment has its own washer and dryer, porch and walk-in closets.

"It's beautiful — just the whole facility, the support, people being here on site," Jill Bonn said. "It feels safe, and I think safety is the biggest thing, especially when you have a child with a disability."

Erica, an enthusiastic gardener, was particularly impressed with the chance to plant herbs and vegetables.

"We've been looking for a while," she said. "We saw a few places, but none of them really had the unique charm of this place."

Though Erica could have lived in a typical apartment with frequent visits from her mom, Quest Village offers training in independent living and, more importantly to Jill, the chance for her daughter to socialize with other young adults like her. Making friends hasn't always been easy.

"Sometimes we on the autism spectrum get treated like we're carrying some kind of disease," Erica said.

She has a high school diploma, volunteers at a library, is applying for jobs and knits prolifically, even launching her own business, Autistically Crafted, which sells handmade goods at art fairs and online. She hopes to find a day job in an office.

For her parents, the move alone is an accomplishment. "When Erica was growing up, there were so many things I thought she'd never do — and then she did them," Jill said. "So now I try not to think that."

Gill expects there will be a Quest Village 2 down the road, given the increasing number of adults with developmental disabilities.

"We already provide services to people living in traditional apartment complexes within the community, but sometimes what we find is that these individuals may feel isolated," he said. "Their neighbors may look out for them, but they're not inviting them over to have pizza. ... Here, residents feel welcome."

THE MEAT AND POTATOES OF LIFE

Lisa Smith Molinari



Perhaps promises will finally become policy

There is a seldom-opened drawer in our file cabinet that contains the only tangible evidence of my legal career. The musty hanging folders have labels such as "Résumés," "Licensing" and "Writing Samples." Even though none of these documents have been used since I had to stop working as a litigation attorney in the late '90s to move overseas with my Navy husband, I refuse to throw them away.

I tell myself that I need the files in case a career opportunity presents itself. But I know I'm really just keeping the yellowed pages as proof that I once did more than make sandwiches and clean toilets.

Like many military spouses, moving every few years killed my career.

I eventually found work as a writer to accommodate our mobile military lifestyle. But frankly I'm disappointed that I wasn't able to adequately utilize the law degree that took three years and more than \$90,000 in student loans to earn, and the Pennsylvania law license that required countless hours of bar exam studying to acquire. Although I'm proud to have put my earning potential aside so my husband could serve his country, I regret that military life often requires spouses to sacrifice employment and education.

The most recent Blue Star Military Family Lifestyle Survey shows that 47 percent of military spouses with children under 18 earn an income, while two-thirds of those civilian spouses are less likely to recommend military spouses who are employed, more than half earn less than \$20,000 a year and one-third earn less than \$10,000. Adding to employment challenges, two-thirds of military families report that child care is a consistent problem.

The drastic drawdown of military forces combined with increased optempo has meant that active-duty members deploy more often and for longer periods. Spouses are understandably worried about employment, the impact of military life on their children and the cohesion of their families. Not surprisingly, the survey indicates that nearly a quarter of military spouses have been diagnosed with depression.

But it was the following survey result that got the attention of the Department of Defense: For the third year in a row, military families are less likely to recommend military service to their children. With an all-volunteer force that comes primarily from military families, this is a major concern.

Perhaps this is why the Pentagon is finally considering new policies for 2018. Robert Wilkie, a military brat and veteran, recently was appointed to the office of Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, a position that has been neglected in recent years. In a Dec. 27 newspaper interview, Wilkie said the Pentagon is considering allowing military families to stay put for longer than two or three years. He criticized the current system, which makes constant movement a hallmark of military life. "It was built at a time when less than 10 percent of the military had families," Wilkie said. "Today, 70 percent have families ... If the families aren't happy, the soldier walks."

The 2018 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) aims to ease the burdens on military families. Signed Dec. 12, the NDAA promises the highest military pay raise since 2010, a rebate of up to \$500 for military spouses who apply for new employment licenses after PCS moves, appointment of quality child care providers when needed, a new policy allowing military families to move before or after servicemembers change duty stations to accommodate school and work schedules, and 20,300 more troops to ease deployment demands.

Sounds great, but when will this become policy? President Trump might have signed the new \$700 billion NDAA, but it still needs to pass the House and pass a bill to fund it. In the meantime, as sequestration looms, the 2017 budget has been extended until Jan. 19.

The old résumés in my file cabinet might never see the light, but this week, I hope Congress will follow through on its promise to make life better for military spouses.

Read more of Lisa Smith Molinari's columns at: themeatandpotatoesoflife.com. Email: meatandpotatoesoflife@googlemail.com

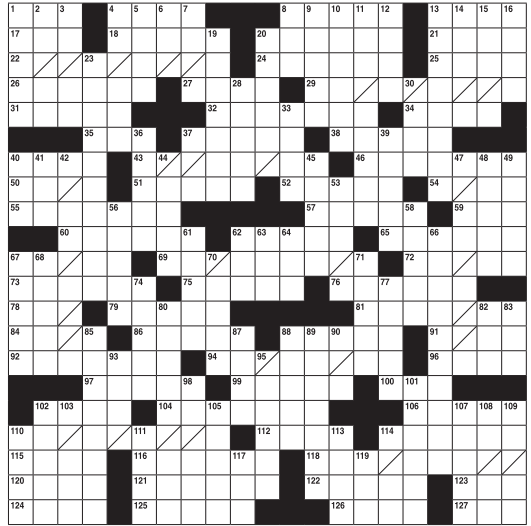
WEEKEND: CROSSWORD AND COMICS

NEW YORK TIMES CROSSWORD

VOWEL PLAY

BY DAVID STEINBERG / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

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| <p>ACROSS</p> <p>1 Start of the third qtr</p> <p>4 Treatment centers?</p> <p>8 Sympath's quality</p> <p>13 Mr. Dithers's wife in "Blondie"</p> <p>17 ____-ball pens</p> <p>18 Ristortane dessert</p> <p>20 Construction-site vehicle</p> <p>21 Top</p> <p>22 Richard Simmons diet regimen / London tabloid</p> <p>24 Records</p> <p>25 One may have a height restriction</p> <p>26 Gauge</p> <p>27 Carpe ____</p> <p>29 What a red pepper on a menu may signal / Made clear</p> <p>31 Canineline animal more closely related to a cat than a dog</p> <p>32 Three-engine planes</p> <p>34 Babies grow into them</p> <p>35 O.J. Simpson trial judge</p> <p>37 "Goosebumps" author</p> <p>38 So-called "cradle of civilization"</p> <p>40 Curse</p> <p>43 Precursor of free throws / Juice container?</p> | <p>46 Pretended to be</p> <p>50 Inventor Howe</p> <p>51 Discombobulated</p> <p>52 Slimming surgeries, in brief</p> <p>54 ____ Ste. Marie, Mich.</p> <p>55 Strategic position</p> <p>57 Like the data in big data</p> <p>59 Warriors' org.</p> <p>60 Really bothered</p> <p>62 Used, as a chair</p> <p>65 Chow mein relative</p> <p>67 Self-reflective question</p> <p>69 Fooler / Summer Olympics stand-out</p> <p>72 Sound signal booster</p> <p>73 Kind of medicine</p> <p>75 Lady friend, in Livorno</p> <p>76 SoCal-based sneaker brand</p> <p>78 Zeno of ____</p> <p>79 Colonial Indian title</p> <p>81 When big bands thrived</p> <p>84 Bridges of old film</p> <p>86 "Shush!"</p> <p>88 Writer Shaw</p> <p>91 Scheduled to arrive</p> <p>92 Hypothesized</p> <p>94 Harry Potter's ex-girlfriend / Register sound</p> <p>96 National Spelling Bee airer</p> <p>97 Some prized Prado pieces</p> <p>99 One of the Kennedys</p> <p>100 Disappointing</p> <p>102 Sin subject?</p> | <p>104 Lessens the distance between, in a race</p> <p>106 Straight or curly hair, e.g.</p> <p>110 "He's so lame!" / Deer variety</p> <p>112 Golden-apple goddess</p> <p>114 App developer's milestone</p> <p>115 Prefix with port</p> <p>116 Photographer's light</p> <p>118 Thin neckwear / Assam or Earl Grey</p> <p>120 Complete</p> <p>121 Lightly touched</p> <p>122 Afghan, e.g.</p> <p>123 Cursive capital that looks like a flipped "&"</p> <p>124 Mustang feature</p> <p>125 Mount</p> <p>126 Little sibling, often brand</p> <p>127 Major race sponsor</p> | <p>13 Flare-ups in the hood?</p> <p>14 OxyContin or Demerol</p> <p>15 Fixes the décor of completely</p> <p>16 Canceled</p> <p>20 Thin layers</p> <p>23 Moscow landmark</p> <p>28 Writer Jong</p> <p>30 "Hoo boy!"</p> <p>33 Solidify</p> <p>36 18, say</p> <p>37 Is litigious</p> <p>39 Baby in a basket</p> <p>40 Actor Patel</p> <p>42 Cookies filled with green creme / Flattish sea creatures</p> <p>44 Best at a hot-dog contest</p> <p>45 Cap</p> <p>47 Risky / Denim attire</p> <p>48 See 49-Down</p> <p>49 With 48-Down, philatelist's collection</p> <p>53 ____ gland (melatonin producer)</p> <p>56 Five things in "La Bohème"</p> <p>58 Pulled a fast one on a way</p> <p>61 Part of a wedding that drops</p> <p>62 Comp ____ (college major, informally)</p> <p>63 Dog-show initials</p> <p>64 Grp. with wands</p> <p>66 Often-oval floor decor</p> <p>67 Puffy</p> |
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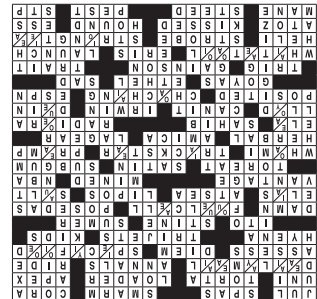
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| <p>68 "Are you listening?!"</p> <p>70 Stressed at the end, in a way</p> <p>71 ____ to go</p> <p>74 Crime-fighting mom of 1980s TV</p> <p>77 Jets and others</p> <p>80 Tried something</p> <p>82 Lambaste</p> <p>83 Massachusetts' Cape</p> | <p>85 Scan, in a way</p> <p>87 Storyteller's transition</p> <p>88 Olympian blood</p> <p>89 Like some German wines</p> <p>90 Howl</p> <p>93 Gargments worn in old Rome</p> <p>95 Future cereal grain</p> | <p>98 Actress Ronan of "Lady Bird"</p> <p>101 Sprint competitor</p> <p>102 Second letter in the Greek for "Athens"</p> <p>103 Vehemently criticize</p> <p>105 Words of resignation</p> <p>107 Potful</p> <p>108 Least warm</p> | <p>109 Daddy Warbucks's bodyguard</p> <p>110 Hard smack</p> <p>111 Judgmental sounds</p> <p>113 Word with "i" or full</p> <p>114 First N.E.L. team to go 0-16 for a season (2008)</p> <p>117 Spring locale</p> <p>119 ____ the day</p> |
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FACES



A new TAKE

Cindy Crawford re-creates iconic Super Bowl ad

By MESSIN FEKADU
Associated Press

Cindy Crawford is heading back to the Super Bowl: The model has re-created her iconic 1992 Super Bowl ad for Pepsi, now featuring her 18-year-old son.

Crawford recently filmed the commercial, which will debut at Super Bowl LII on Feb. 4. It includes her son, Presley Walker Gerber, as well as footage from Michael Jackson's memorable Pepsi commercial.

The 51-year-old said she didn't hesitate to re-create the ad 26 years later, especially since she was able to work with her son.

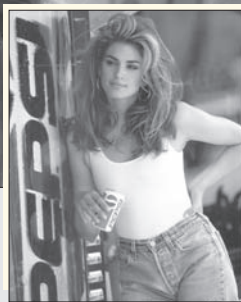
"Just as a mother, we drove to work together that day and we shared the same trailer. And when he was doing his thing, I was just a proud mom watching from the sidelines, trying not to annoy him," she said in a phone interview Wednesday.

The new Super Bowl ad, dubbed "This

Is The Pepsi," is part of the company's Pepsi Generation campaign honoring the brand's 120-year history in pop culture. The original features Crawford in a tank top and jeans shorts — made from her own jeans she brought to the set that day — driving a Lamborghini and stopping at a gas station to buy a can of soda. She said she felt the 1992 spot "became such a classic for so many reasons."

"It was one of those moments in my career that when I walked down the street, people were like, 'Pepsi!' Or I'd be at a bar and people would send me over a Pepsi," she said, laughing. "And it's funny because during Halloween a lot of women will dress up as me in that commercial. It's like an easy Halloween costume."

Crawford plans to attend the Super Bowl in Minneapolis, where her father lives. "I think probably that will be the highlight for me is just getting to see my dad," she said. "I took him to a Super Bowl before I had kids ... and



Pepsi/AP

Actress-model Cindy Crawford starred in the 1992 Super Bowl Pepsi commercial, above. She returns for another Pepsi commercial, at top, to premiere during Super Bowl LII on Feb. 4.

it's not like he ever wanted to go to an awards show or something like that, but if I can take him to the Super Bowl, that's a pretty cool thing for me to be able to do with my dad."

Crawford's modeling talents have not only extended to her son — her 16-year-old daughter graces the February cover of *Vogue Paris*. "She's more ready for it. She's just so much more sophisticated and worldly than I was at that age," she said of Kaia Jordan Gerber.

Actors earned very different salaries for 'All the Money in the World' reshoots

By KATE FELDMAN
New York Daily News

Michelle Williams reportedly earned about 1 percent of Mark Wahlberg's salary during reshoots for "All the Money in the World."

The actress was paid about \$80 per day to reshoot scenes including Kevin Spacey, totaling less than \$1,000, according to USA Today. Wahlberg, meanwhile, earned \$1.5 million.

Both actors are represented by the William Morris Endeavor agency. Reps for the two did not immediately return requests for comment.

"All the Money in the World" was reshoot with Christopher Plummer replacing Spacey after he was accused of sexual assault by multiple men.

Director Ridley Scott previously told the Daily News that he made the decision to remove Spacey "immediately." Scott told USA Today in December that he "refused to get paid" and that "everyone did it for nothing," but that appears to be untrue.

The large pay gap between Williams and Wahlberg drew the attention of many online.

"How on God's green Earth does Wahlberg not know the room, there? No way he doesn't read everyone else is doing it for free. He makes \$1,000 a year — how do you not tell your agent to let this one go?" "Good Place" creator Michael Schur tweeted. "If he isn't told to donate \$1.5m to RAINN or Planned Parenthood or some other non-profit in the next 48 hours, he should fire his publicist."

Jessica Chastain commented on early rumors about the difference as well. "I really hope that with everything coming to light, she was paid fairly," she tweeted. "She's a brilliant actress and is wonderful in the film."

Busy Phillips called the reports "shameful" and Judd Apatow said it "was so messed up that it is almost hard to believe."

New study finds male dominance in Hollywood unchanged in last 20 years

From wire reports

Women made up just 18 percent of all the directors, writers, producers, executive producers, editors and cinematographers who worked on the top 250 American films released last year, according to a new study.

The 20th annual "Celluloid Ceiling" study on the behind-the-camera employment of women was released Monday by San Diego State University's Center for the Study of Women in Television and Film. The results show virtually no change in the past 20 years for women in Hollywood. In 1998, the same calculation of behind-the-scenes jobs for women was 17 percent.

The study found that in last year's top 250 films, 25 percent of producers were women, 11 percent of directors were women and just 4 percent of cinematographers were women.

"The film industry has utterly failed to address the continuing underemployment of women behind the scenes," said Martha M. Lauzen, the study's author. "This

negligence has produced a toxic culture that supported the recent sexual harassment scandals and truncates so many women's careers."

Weinstein slapped in face at restaurant

Disgraced filmmaker Harvey Weinstein got slapped in the face and cursed out by a restaurant patron as he left an Arizona eatery Tuesday, new video reveals.

Weinstein — who is accused of sexual harassment, assault or rape by dozens of women — was walking out of Elements in Scottsdale after dinner when a man, only identified as Steve, hit him twice in the face with a backhand, according to TMZ, which published the footage. Then the man cursed at him.

Weinstein stumbled a bit after Steve slapped his face before quickly leaving. Weinstein opted not to call the police following the incident.

Weinstein has denied all allegations of non-consensual sex.

Weinstein and his fashion de-

signer wife Georgina Chapman have finalized the terms of their divorce, a source told the New York Daily News on Wednesday. The settlement worth \$15 million to \$20 million came just ahead of the estranged couple's 10-year anniversary, the source said. The deal was finalized late last year.

The source said both sides had hoped to keep the terms secret.

Chapman, 41, is expected to get primary custody of their children, ages 4 and 7.

Attorneys for both declined to comment. Chapman has yet to file papers making the divorce official.

Other news

■ **Michael Douglas** told Deadline that he anticipated an upcoming report would contain an allegation by a former employee that he acted inappropriately in front of her about 32 years ago. Douglas decided to try "to get ahead of" the story by speaking to Deadline, calling it a "complete lie, fabrication."

■ **Country music legend Willie Nelson**, 84, has canceled shows in Nevada and California after leaving a concert in San Diego after performing one song. A statement from Ticketmaster said he left the stage early because of an illness.

■ **Greta Gerwig** says she'll never work with Woody Allen again. The "Lady Bird" director said Tuesday that she regrets her role in the 2012 "To Rome With Love," which preceded Dylan Farrow's accusations of sexual assault against him. In 2014, Farrow claimed that Allen, her adoptive father, abused her in 1993.

"Greta, thank you for your voice," Farrow thanked Tuesday.

■ **Corey Feldman**, the former child star who has launched a crusade against what he says is a pedophilia ring lurking in Hollywood, is under investigation for sexual battery. Feldman, 46, was named as the suspect in a police report filed in Los Angeles earlier this week alleging sexual battery. Los Angeles Police Department public information officer Mike Lopez told the New York Daily News. The report was filed

by a woman who says the actor grabbed her buttocks in early 2017, according to TMZ. "Corey" vehemently denies these egregious claims, a rep for the actor told the gossip site.

■ **UFC star Ronda Rousey's** next fight could come in a WWE women's pay-per-view executive Paul Levesque, better known as wrestling superstar Triple H, had dinner with Rousey in Los Angeles on Tuesday night, again fueling speculation that UFC's biggest female star could leave the octagon for a career in professional wrestling. Levesque told The Associated Press on Wednesday that WWE is talking with Rousey and has long had a friendly relationship with her.

■ **"Crash"** writer and director Tom Haggis has resigned his chair of the board of the charity he founded, Artists for Peace and Justice. The organization says Wednesday that Haggis' resignation was accepted Jan. 4, one day before The Associated Press published accounts from three women alleging sexual misconduct by the filmmaker.

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Stars and Stripes (USPS 01473900) is published weekdays (except Dec. 25 and Jan. 1) for 50 cents Monday through Thursday and for \$1 on Friday by Pacific Stars and Stripes, Unit 45002, APO AF 96338-5002. Periodicals postage paid at San Francisco, CA. Postmaster, send address changes to Pacific Stars and Stripes, Unit 45002, APO AF 96338-5002.

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OPINION

Ruling isn't going to save the 'Dreamers'

By NOAH FELDMAN
Bloomberg View

A federal judge in California on Tuesday blocked President Donald Trump from rescinding the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, which he had planned to phase out in March. The impulse to protect the so-called "Dreamers" is admirable. But legally speaking, the opinion can't be correct. If President Barack Obama had the legal authority to use his discretion to create DACA in the first place — itself a close legal question — Trump must have the legal authority to reverse DACA on the ground that he considers it to have exceeded Obama's powers.

District Judge William Alsup's ruling was based on a provision of the Administrative Procedure Act that says executive agency actions must not be arbitrary and capricious. The court held that it was arbitrary for Trump's Department of Homeland Security to rescind DACA. It reasoned that because DACA was legal, Homeland Security could not rescind it for being illegal.

This logic may sound plausible. But it runs into multiple legal problems.

The first has to do with applying the arbitrary and capricious standard to DACA in the first place. The Administrative Procedure Act functions so that the courts can supervise executive agencies and be sure their actions are based on reasoned policy logic. But the law makes an exception for any decision that is "committed to agency discretion by law."

The original DACA order was based on the president's discretionary authority to decide how to enforce federal immigration law. Recall that Dreamers have no statutory right to be in the country — they are the children of undocumented immigrants. DACA was, formally speaking, an announced discretionary decision by the executive branch not to deport Dreamers.

In court, the Trump administration ar-

gued that if DACA was itself an exercise of discretion, the decision to revoke DACA must similarly be an exercise of discretion and not subject to review under the Administrative Procedure Act. In other words, the courts have no business telling the president that he cannot reverse a discretionary decision by a previous president.

The federal judge rejected this argument by saying that while the decision not to deport was indeed discretionary and not subject to review, the decision to deport was not discretionary in the same way. It added that there was further reason to review Homeland Security's move because DACA had invited Dreamers "out of the shadows" and reversing the program would subject them to consequences that would infringe on the liberty and property interests created by the original order.

There's something appealing about this argument. Certainly prosecuting or deporting someone is active in the way that deciding not to do so is not. Yet it's difficult to accept that once the government decides not to prosecute or deport someone, it must then justify the decision to change its mind. The asymmetry isn't especially content with general principles of administrative law.

The second significant legal problem with the California court's decision is its assertion that it was arbitrary and capricious for Homeland Security to rescind DACA.

The main basis the government gave for ending DACA was that it was illegal when Obama enacted it — it exceeded his constitutional authority. This was essentially the view taken by the federal district court in Texas that froze the Deferred Action for Parents of Americans plan that was DACA's twin sibling, allowing the undocumented parents of citizen children to stay in the country. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the 5th circuit said that the U.S. Supreme Court split 4-4 on the issue after Justice Antonin Scalia's death and before Trump named Neil Gorsuch to the court.

The federal district court in California disagreed. It said that DACA was legal in the first place, and that the Supreme Court never said otherwise. It concluded that ending DACA "was based on the flawed legal premise that the agency lacked authority to implement DACA." And it rejected the notion that it was up to the executive branch to decide whether to defend DACA in court, especially in the 5th Circuit where it is arguably illegal under the precedent of the DACA program.

This analysis cannot be correct. One presidential administration is entitled to disagree with the legal analysis of another. What's more, the president has the right to interpret the Constitution when it comes to the legality of his own actions. He doesn't have to wait for a court to tell him something is illegal. He can judge for himself.

And the legal judgment that DACA exceeds presidential authority certainly isn't arbitrary or capricious. A federal court of appeals and four Supreme Court justices have already said DAPA was. If it weren't for Scalia's death, it's highly probable that the majority of the justices would have taken that view. And it seems even more likely that Gorsuch would now provide the deciding fifth vote to say DACA is unconstitutional.

Trump's Department of Homeland Security can't have been acting arbitrarily because its judgment aligns with these authorities.

The California judge cited Trump's pro-DACA tweets as evidence that continuing the program serves the public interest. That's cute, but misleading. Trump is calling for congressional legislation to continue DACA, not for executive action.

I deeply hope some version of DACA is signed into law. But this judicial decision isn't going to save the Dreamers, no matter how well-intentioned it might be.

Noah Feldman is a Bloomberg View columnist. He is a professor of constitutional and international law at Harvard University and was a clerk to U.S. Supreme Court Justice David Souter.

Democrats should give Trump his border wall

By FRANCIS WILKINSON
Bloomberg View

Someone, somewhere, somehow is going to have to give President Donald Trump a piece of wall to stand in front of his military leaders. The Democratic congressional leaders Chuck Schumer and Nancy Pelosi.

The wall is not a good idea; it's a colossal boondoggle in the making. That's why many Republicans as well as Democrats oppose the president's signature initiative. Walls are ill-suited to the task. Despite the popularity of the U.S.-Mexico border, and much of that geography happens to be owned by private citizens who do not want a 30-foot eyesore destroying their property. Engineering problems will probably prove less daunting than the legal sort. Both pale before the ingenious threat of lawyers.

Practicalities sometimes get tossed aside in the immigration debate, mostly because immigration policy is forged by joining two irreconcilable ambitions. On one side is the drive for human freedom for people who illegally crossed the border to build better lives and join the great mix of America. On the other is a fierce determination to prevent people from crossing the border illegally, period.

There is no way to make sense of these contrasting visions except by compromise that fulfills neither. Thus, the price of freedom for undocumented immigrants living in the U.S., including "Dreamers" brought

here as children, can only be some form of increased security.

Conservatives in Congress cannot face their voters if they agree to legalization, let alone citizenship, for all 11 million immigrants living illegally in the U.S. without being assured that the process will not repeat itself in another few decades. A brief review of American history and a survey of its lengthy borders, staggeringly vast coastline, thousands of airports and magnetic attraction to strivers suggests that this may be an elusive goal.

The only genuine security against illegal immigration is a system, such as E-Verify, to prevent undocumented immigrants from gaining employment. Many industries, including agriculture, construction and food processing, are not eager to adopt E-Verify. And even if they did, it's far from foolproof. Many employers, regardless of industry, cut corners. (Ask Trump.)

One way or another, billions of dollars will be spent on security to ransom Dreamers, and eventually others, and much of that spending will be sub-optimal. For example, the doubling of the Border Patrol's budget to 10,000 agents, the sophisticated surveillance technology, have unquestionably made it harder to cross the border illegally. However, the nature of the crossings has changed as well. Many more immigrants are fleeing violence in Central America and are happy to turn themselves in to U.S. agents once they cross. Drones, surveillance towers and increased person-

nel merely facilitate the meet and greet.

Meanwhile, the militarization of the border has led to the professionalization of sneaking across it. Immigrants now pay increasingly high fees to cartels to secure passage. Enriching those cartels was not exactly the desired outcome.

Other expenditures would surely be more cost-effective. The Border Patrol could make good use of paved roads and better technology. But spending money wisely on proven deterrents won't fulfill the requirements of a political deal: Immigration conservatives must get something expensive and concrete in exchange for freeing Dreamers, even if that something turns out to be wasteful and largely symbolic. Indeed, the Trump administration has already proposed cutting useful programs to fund the symbolically satisfying sort.

Given those facts, a piece of wall is a small concession that Democrats (and border-state Republicans, most of whom also support the wall) should make. A wall is a symbol to Trump voters and a promise he desperately wants to fulfill. It's a symbol Democrats can exploit, as well, reserving swing voters that they are not the party of "open borders." Sure, it's a waste. But a brief, discrete stretch of tremendous, Trumpian edifice may be the incongruous piece of human freedom.

Francis Wilkinson writes editorials on politics and U.S. domestic policy for Bloomberg View.

OPINION

What newspapers are saying at home

The following editorial excerpts are selected from a cross section of newspapers throughout the United States. The editorials are provided by The Associated Press and other statewide syndicates.

Sessions fighting wrong drug The Decatur (Ala.) Daily

The U.S. is in the middle of an opioid epidemic.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, from 2014 to 2015, overdose-related deaths from one opioid alone, heroin, increased by 20.6 percent, with nearly 13,000 people dying in 2015.

Meanwhile, there remain no known marijuana overdose deaths, according to the Drug Enforcement Administration, and studies have found states that have legalized marijuana have seen a decrease in opioid-related deaths.

So, of course, U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions has decided to ramp up the fight against — legal marijuana.

On Jan. 4, Sessions rescinded the Obama administration's relatively hands-off policy toward states that have legalized marijuana for either medical or recreational use. Federal prosecutors where marijuana is legal under state law will now be free to decide for themselves how aggressively to enforce federal laws.

The Justice Department doesn't have the resources to truly crack down on marijuana in states where they have no state and local support. But it doesn't necessarily need them.

The main effect of Sessions' action is to cause uncertainty, which will disrupt the newly burgeoning legal pot markets in states like Colorado and California.

The prospect of an aggressive federal prosecutor swooping in isn't just a threat to marijuana businesses, but also anyone who does business with them, such as financial institutions or landlords.

Not coincidentally, Sessions also opposes reforming civil asset forfeiture, which allows the government to seize the property of the accused even before they're convicted of a crime — and makes it difficult and sometimes impossible even for those found not guilty to get their property back. A landlord renting to a marijuana-related business might well have his rental property seized by the feds should a federal attorney emboldened by Sessions' renewed anti-marijuana crusade be inclined to press the issue.

Disrupting marijuana businesses is exactly what Sessions intends. He may lack the resources to carry on a full-scale drug war without state and local cooperation, but he can create chaos.

Why would Sessions do this? He is proudly stuck in the past and claims marijuana is "only slightly less awful" than drugs like heroin.

I realize this may be an unfashionable belief in a time of growing tolerance of drug use. But too many lives are at stake to worry about being fashionable." Sessions told law enforcement officials in a speech last year. "I reject the idea that America will be a better place if marijuana is sold in every corner store. And I am astonished to hear people suggest that we can solve our heroin crisis by legalizing marijuana — so people can trade one life-wrecking dependency for another that's only slightly less awful."

Sessions may embrace federalism only when it suits his fancy, but the Senate should embrace it here and leave the war



P. SOLOMON BANDA/AP

Andy Williams, above, is founder and CEO of Medicine Man Denver. Colorado's top federal prosecutor said his office won't alter its approach to enforcing marijuana crimes after U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions withdrew a policy on Jan. 4 that allowed pot markets to emerge in states such as Colorado that legalized the drug.

on marijuana up to the states that still choose to wage it and not force it upon those that don't.

Welfare reform administrative The Orange County (Calif.) Register

Following the critical passage of tax reform, congressional Republicans and President Donald Trump might now turn their attention to reforming at least some of the nation's vast, too often ineffective social safety net.

In 1964, President Lyndon Johnson declared an "unconditional war on poverty in America." Since then, the United States has spent \$23 trillion on anti-poverty programs, including nearly \$1 trillion annually in recent years. Adjusted for inflation, according to The Heritage Foundation, this spending, which doesn't include programs such as Social Security or Medicare, amounts to "three times the cost of all military wars in U.S. history since the American Revolution."

Yet, despite this spending, we are far from eradicating poverty. After years of hovering around 15 percent following the Great Recession, the national poverty rate in 2016 reported by the Census was 12.7 percent. When accounting for factors like the price of housing, the national poverty rate under the Census Bureau's Supplemental Poverty Measure rises to 14.7 percent, while in places like California it surpasses 20 percent.

More than \$23 trillion and over half a century later, these are not the sort of results anyone who values a social safety net should be contented with. Before continuing down this road of pouring vast sums of money on programs that aren't necessarily producing results, there ought to be greater study of federal anti-poverty programs, their efficiency and effectiveness.

One problem, as Michael Tanner, of the Cato Institute, recently noted in National Review, is that our current welfare system "is a bureaucratic nightmare." With more than 100 different programs with distinct requirements, management and oversight, the system increasingly provides payments not to the poor themselves, but to an industry of landlords, doctors, grocers and others who serve the poor."

Given the often complicated set of rules around the numerous programs, welfare beneficiaries sometimes end up themselves losing out more in benefits than they'd gain from working, among the many incentive problems that traps many from being able to move forward with their lives.

These are among the many issues that the White House and Congress can and should seek solutions to. Of course, with many rural Republican voters reliant on

public assistance, even Republican members of Congress can be vulnerable to political backlash if they go too far in curtailing welfare spending.

But the goal shouldn't be to cut for the sake of cutting. While Trump has lamented that "people are taking advantage of the system," most people receiving benefits from America's social safety net actually are in need. Ensuring our social safety net is effective and encourages able-bodied people to work and support themselves as soon and as much as they can is something that should be able to yield bipartisan support.

Ultimately, of course, the best way to combat poverty is to ensure America's economy continues to grow and jobs remain accessible to as many Americans as possible. Tax reform and Trump's halt on excessive new regulations are important steps toward that. But the White House and Congress shouldn't be content with that. Other areas are ripe for improvement as well, like occupational licensing reform to remove artificial barriers to work.

Former President Barack Obama said during his 2015 State of the Union address that "When what you're doing doesn't work for 50 years, it's time to try something new." He was talking about the embargo with Cuba, but what is true of relations with Cuba is true of the way we deliver aid to the neediest among us as well. It's time to get serious about welfare reform.

Special refugee status abused The Boston Herald

It's easy to have sympathy for some 200,000 Salvadoran immigrants who now face possible deportation and yet still acknowledge that the events that allowed them their special refugee status were in 2001.

El Salvador remains a crime-ridden, dysfunctional country that is perpetually unable to provide a stable environment for its people. In that, it is hardly alone on this planet. But when earthquakes hit in 2001, the U.S. granted special status to many who were able to flee, allowing them to basically "cut the line" of our immigration system.

As recently as September 2016, the Obama administration certified that El Salvador was still unable to accept such a large group of returning citizens.

And late last week their nation's president implored Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen to allow more time for Congress to come up with a fix that would allow his citizens to stay here.

The sad fact is that many people in El Salvador are dependent on the cash flow from relatives living in the U.S. — hence

the plea from their own president.

Immigrants from Haiti, Nicaragua and South Sudan, who came in under the same kind of disaster relief program, have already been put on notice that their special status will end over the next 18 months or so. Honduras, which has some 50,000 emigres here, is likely next on Nielsen's list.

It has been a poorly kept secret under at least three presidential administrations that the program (adopted by Congress in 1990) is yet another end run around a real immigration fix. A humanitarian carve-out, like a temporary program there and Congress has saved itself the difficult job of coming up with actual legislation that would provide a long-term solution and set policy.

Many of those caught up in the current controversy would likely qualify to remain under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA, if only Congress would come up with a permanent fix for that.

America needs its immigrants just as much as they need a safe haven from the countries they have left. The legal limbo of temporary programs isn't fair to them or to the nation they have adopted.

Air travel can irk, but it is safe The Dallas Morning News

Everyone gripes about air travel. The complaints are universal: bare-it-all security checks; shoving matches over cabin bin space; economy seats increasingly reminiscent of a miniature medieval torture cell maliciously called the "little ease."

Oh, for those glamorous jet-set days of yesteryear, when flyers were treated like royalty starting at airport curbside. Can modern air travel really be called an improvement?

Yes, in the starkest and most critical terms: You'll get there in one piece. Year's-end reports show 2017 was the safest year for commercial travel in aviation history.

Studies by two separate safety organizations — a team of Dutch aviation consultants and the U.S.-based Aviation Safety Network — reported this month that, out of a record 37 million flights, there were no passenger jet crashes in the world last year. The handful of fatal commercial accidents that did occur were limited to either cargo planes or regional carriers operating small aircraft.

This is no small achievement. Harrowing, high-fatality plane crashes, if not routine, were for decades events that took place every few years.

Experts say technology and training have steadily reduced the incidence of these tragedies over the years. A 1985 crash of a Delta jumbo jet at Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport that killed 137 people, in fact, led directly to new standards in windshear-detection ability in both onboard and ground-based systems.

At the same time, new safety measures in aircraft construction mean that even in the event of a crash, passengers are more likely to survive. That's due, among other factors, to better fire suppression and evacuation procedures.

Experts caution that there remain safety issues that require continued attention, and that there is no room for complacency in the operation of our nation's — and our planet's — complex air transit system. Ongoing challenges include risks posed by human fatigue and the fire danger posed by batteries used in consumer electronics. Consultants also warn that officials assure you that the gravest modern danger to commercial air travel is the drive to the airport, they have the statistics to back it up. Passenger flights operated by major carriers are far and away the safest means of popular transportation.

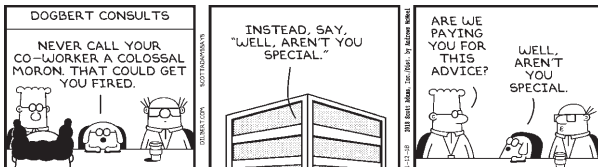
And what about the presidential Twitter claim last week, during which the commander in chief took credit for last year's air safety record?

"It's not a one-year phenomenon," was the tactful response to The Washington Post from retired pilot and airline safety consultant John O'Connell, who has worked thousands of people over decades.

Frazz



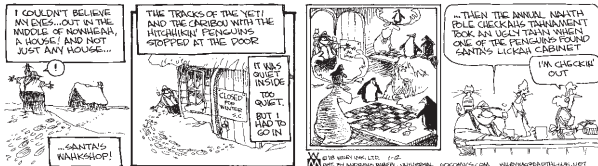
Dilbert



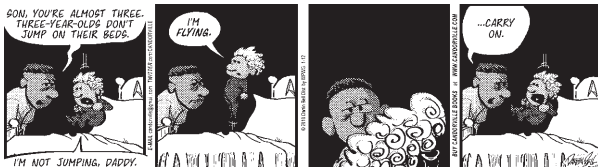
Pearls Before Swine



Non Sequitur



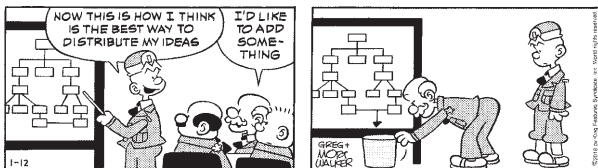
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Carpe Diem



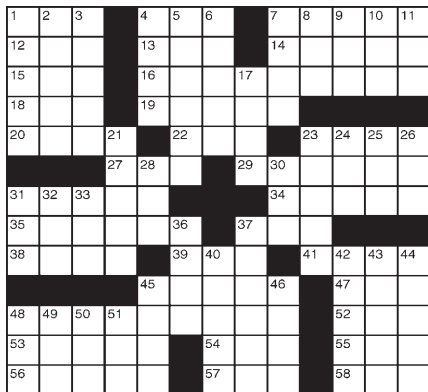
Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



ACROSS

- 1 24 hours
- 4 Started
- 7 Wooden peg
- 12 — -de-France
- 13 Chopper
- 14 Crop up
- 15 Energy
- 16 Opera legend
- 18 Packed away
- 19 Disdain
- 20 Taboo
- 22 Potent stick
- 23 Bridge coup
- 27 Boom times
- 29 African desert
- 31 Homer
- 32 Simpson's wife
- 34 Firm belief
- 35 Fictitious
- 37 — Paulo, Brazil
- 38 Bump into
- 39 "As I see it," in a text
- 41 Handle
- 45 Canonized figure
- 47 Ms. Thurman
- 48 Baked pasta dish
- 52 Wee bit
- 53 Michelangelo masterpiece
- 54 Light brown
- 55 Yon maiden
- 56 Sparkle

- 57 Pvt.'s superior
- 58 Skull tool

DOWN

- 1 Sofa's kin
- 2 Justice Samuel
- 3 Oman neighbor
- 4 Track circuits
- 5 Demands, as payment
- 6 English cattle breed
- 7 "Phooey!"
- 8 Granada gold
- 9 Humorist
- 10 "Guinness Book" suffix
- 11 Tiki bar necklace
- 17 Sciences' partner
- 21 Should, with "to"
- 23 Trembled
- 24 Trail the pack
- 25 Branch
- 26 Goat's plaint
- 28 Architect I.M. —
- 30 Oklahoma city
- 31 "Tasty!"
- 32 Sailor's assent
- 33 GPS suggestion
- 36 "Arrivederci!" writer Susan
- 40 Catchers' needs
- 42 Bonkers
- 43 D-Day beach
- 44 Ruth — Ginsburg
- 45 Con job
- 46 Shade
- 48 Fuel stat
- 49 Be sick
- 50 Formerly called
- 51 "Give — whirl!"

Answer to Previous Puzzle



1-12

CRYPTOQUIP

SRLYJLCA WC NWKDSWJQ'N

GEWGDEVQ VFZV LN YDZCLCA

VW VFD NLJD JZCADEWRNYQ:

EDZY DNVZVD YLNVLCA.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: YOU CLAIM YOU'RE COLD IN HERE WHEN EVERYBODY ELSE SAYS THEY ARE VERY WARM? DON'T BE CHILLY!

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: N equals S

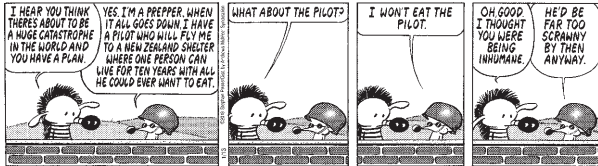
Frazz



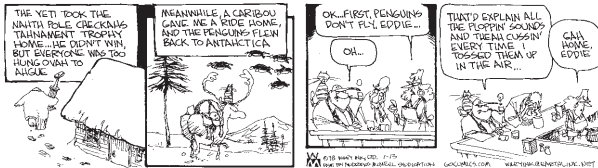
Dilbert



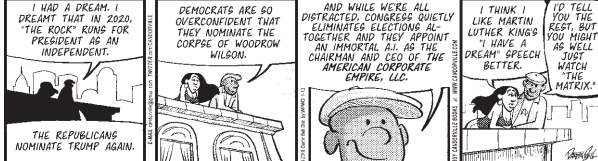
Pearls Before Swine



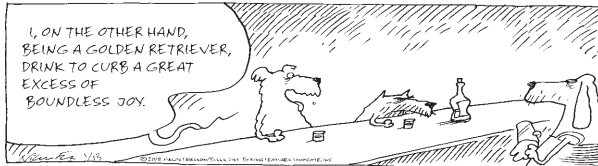
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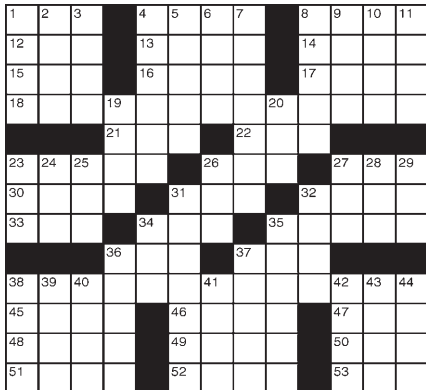
Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



ACROSS

- 1 Lustrous black
- 4 Cager O'Neal, for short
- 8 Vacillate
- 12 In the style of
- 13 Humdinger
- 14 Listening device
- 15 Roman 1051
- 16 Wry Bombeck
- 17 Nick and Nora's pet
- 18 Pavlova's shoe
- 21 Hosp. hooks
- 22 Connections
- 23 Corn
- 26 "Bobby" subj.
- 27 Pear-shaped fruit
- 30 Verdi opera
- 31 Tofu source
- 32 Custard recipe
- 33 Expert
- 34 Bit of butter
- 35 Batter's dry spell
- 36 "Bow-wow!"
- 37 — glance
- 38 Joe DiMaggio's nickname
- 45 "Dedicated to the — Love"
- 46 Release money
- 47 Log chopper
- 48 "Act now!"
- 49 Part of Q.E.D.
- 50 Freedom, for short
- 51 Writer Quindlen

- 52 Dick Tracy's love
- 53 LAX info

DOWN

- 1 Doorframe piece
- 2 First lady of scat
- 3 Follow
- 4 Record holder?
- 5 Smarts
- 6 Charitable donation
- 7 Meet the requirements
- 8 Trades
- 9 Trace of smoke
- 10 Museo display
- 11 Calendar quota
- 19 Minnelli of "Arthur"
- 20 Pen filler
- 23 Sailor's chart
- 24 Melody
- 25 Wedding words
- 26 Hogwash
- 27 Winter ailment
- 28 "— a Camera"
- 29 Econ. statistic
- 31 Low-risk wager
- 32 Envelope part
- 34 Opposite of "post"
- 35 Height-enhancing circus props
- 36 Curly-tailed dog
- 37 Fake name
- 38 Luke's mentor
- 39 Soon, poetically
- 40 German refusal
- 41 Give a darn
- 42 Ashen
- 43 Way out
- 44 Country's McEntire

Answer to Previous Puzzle



1-13

CRYPTOQUIP

V I J Y H J P D Y H K Q H C I S H J Q H N Z

D C P H J D I J G L J V N E H G K H J H

S H J U Q D R Q - X L N T D P U : P Q H H J N

I V R I I Z E H D T D C R G .

Yesterday's Cryptquip: BUILDING ON SOMEBODY'S PROPERTY THAT IS LEANING TO THE SIDE DANGEROUSLY: REAL ESTATE LISTING.

Today's Cryptquip Clue: P equals T



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Pro football

NFL playoffs

Wild-card playoffs
Jan. 7 — New York Jets at
Tennessee 22, Kansas City 13
Atlanta 26, Los Angeles Rams 13
Jacksonville 10, Buffalo 3
New Orleans 31, Carolina 26

Divisional playoffs

Saturday, Jan. 13
Atlanta at Philadelphia
Tennessee at New England
Sunday, Jan. 14
Jacksonville at Pittsburgh
New Orleans at Minnesota

Conference Championships

Sunday, Jan. 21
AFC
NFC

Pro Bowl

Jan. 27 — San Francisco 49ers
at Orlando, Fla.

Super Bowl

Sunday, Feb. 4
at Minneapolis

AFC champion vs. NFC champion

Calendar

Jan. 13-14 — Divisional playoffs
Jan. 21 — Conference championships
Feb. 4 — Super Bowl at Minneapolis.
The first day of the NFL season
franchise or transition plays.

Tennis

Auckland Open

Wednesdays
at ASB Tennis Arena
Auckland, New Zealand
Purse: \$501,345 (W7250)
Singles
Second Round
Roberto Bautista Agut, 5 (Spain), def.
Steve Johnson, United States, 2-6, 6-2,
6-3

Peter Gogowyicz, Germany, def. Jack
Socci, United States, 6-3, 6-4

Jiri Vesely, Czech Republic, def. Sam
Ogden, 3 (United States), 6-4, 6-7 (10),
7-6 (5)

Robin Haase, Netherlands, def. Lukas
Lusky, Slovakia, 7-6 (4), 6-2

Daniel Ferrer, Spain, def. Joao Sousa,
Portugal, 6-2, 6-2

Karen Kachanov, Russia, def. Pablo
Cuevas, Uruguay, 6-2, 7-6 (4)

Jan Martinovic, Croatia, def. 6-1
Daniel Sepin, Argentina, 6-2, 6-4

Chung Hyeon, South Korea, def. John
Isner, 4 (United States), 7-6 (3), 5-7, 6-2

Oliver Marach, Austria, and Mate
Pavic, 3 (Croatia), def. Guillermo Duran
and Andres Molteni, Argentina, 6-4, 6-7
10, 6-3

Daniel Nestor, Canada, and Donald
Young, 3 (United States), def. Andre
and Matwe Midkoff, Netherlands, 6-3,
3-6, 10-8

Andrei Gorn, Belarus, and Philipp Ols-
wald, Austria, def. Marcus Daniell, New
Zealand, and Dominic Ingol, 6-3, 6-4,
3-6, 10-8

Sydney International
Wednesday
at Olympic Park Tennis Centre
Sydney, Australia
Purse: Men, \$465,910 (W7250); Women,
\$733,500 (Premier)
Singles
Hard-Open
Second Round
Nicola Pietrangeli, Italy, def. Albert Ramo-
s-Vinolas, 1 (Spain), 6-3, 7-5

Adrian Mannarino, 5 (France), def. Ri-
cardo Rodriguez, Belgium, 6-3, 6-4

Fabio Fognini, 4 (Italy), def. Alexander
Bublik, 3 (Kazakhstan), 6-3, 6-4

Benoit Paire, France, def. Leonardo
Mayer, Argentina, 6-2, 3-6, 6-1

John Millman, Australia, def. Daniel
Zhang, 3 (China), 6-3, 6-4

Filipino Lopez, Spain, def. Jared
Schwartzman, 3 (Argentina), 6-3, 7-6 (1)

John Millman, Australia, def. Daniel
Zhang, 3 (China), 6-3, 7-6 (1)

John Millman, Australia, def. Daniel
Zhang, 3 (China), 6-3, 7-6 (1)

John Millman, Australia, def. Daniel
Zhang, 3 (China), 6-3, 7-6 (1)

John Millman, Australia, def. Daniel
Zhang, 3 (China), 6-3, 7-6 (1)

John Millman, Australia, def. Daniel
Zhang, 3 (China), 6-3, 7-6 (1)

John Millman, Australia, def. Daniel
Zhang, 3 (China), 6-3, 7-6 (1)

John Millman, Australia, def. Daniel
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Zhang, 3 (China), 6-3, 7-6 (1)

John Millman, Australia, def. Daniel
Zhang, 3 (China), 6-3, 7-6 (1)

John Millman, Australia, def. Daniel
Zhang, 3 (China), 6-3, 7-6 (1)

AP spotlight

Jan. 12
1951 — Ezzard Charles knocks out
Lee Oma in the 10th round at Madison
Square Garden in New York to retain the
heavyweight title.

1958 — Dolph Schayes of the Syracuse
Nationalists set an NBA record for career
points in a 135-109 victory over the De-
troit Pistons. Schayes scores 23 points to
set his career mark at 17,164 and set a
record of 11,764 held by George Mikan.

1958 — The NCAA rules committee
makes the first change in football scor-
ing rules since 1912 by adding the two-
point conversion.

1960 — Syracuse's Dolph Schayes be-
comes the first player in NBA history to
score 15,000 career points.

1967 — New York Jets quarterback Joe
Namath "guarantees" a victory before the
game against the 17-point favorite Bal-
timore Colts, then leads the AFL to its
first Super Bowl victory, a 16-7 triumph
over a Baltimore team that had lost only
one in 16 games all season.

1969 — The Pittsburgh Steelers totally
shut down Minnesota's offense, handling
the Vikings their third Super Bowl defeat,
16-6.

1969 — Chicago's Steve Savard ties an
NHL record for the fastest goal to start a
period by scoring four seconds into the
third period of the Blackhawks' 4-2 vic-
tory over the Hartford Whalers.

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shut down Minnesota's offense, handling
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NHL record for the fastest goal to start a
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College basketball

Wednesday's men's scores

EAST
Albany (NY) 78, Troy Brook 65

Caldwell 66, Wilmington (Del.) 64

Dominican (NY) 78, Holy Family 71

Duke 87, Pittsburgh 52

Farmingdale 74, Poughkeepsie 61

Hartford 84, Mass.-Lowell 73

Long Island (NY) 76, Westbury 51

NY City 81, Stonington 67

NY State 76, Westchester 67

Post (Conn.) 81, Chestnut Hill 63

Quinnipiac 68, Marist 73, OT

Scranton 84, Susquehanna 73

St. Bonaventure 77, Fordham 61

St. John's 81, Stonham 61

UMBC 52, UCF 53

UMBC 52, Maine 67

UMass 86, La Salle 79, OT

Vermont 91, Dartmouth 78

West Virginia 86, Xavier 65

SOUTH
Carson-Newman (TN), Tusculum 86

Davidson 72, George Washington 45

Florida 71, Mississippi 45

Furman 73, Chattanooga 65

George Mason 81, Saint Joseph's 79

George College 88, Clayton 54

Georgia College 60, Notre Dame 53

Kentucky Wesleyan 81, Salem International 67

Lees-McRae 76, King (Tenn.) 74

Louisville 73, Florida 73

Mount Union 76, Barton 52

North Carolina 73, Transylvania 64

Nicholls 85, McKee 61

Spaulding 69, Blackburn 65, OT

Union College 76, Augusta 61

Union (Ky.) 97, Allen 80

Virginia Tech 66, Wake Forest 75

Washington & Lee, E. Mennonite 82

Westford 63, Harvard 76

MIDWEST
Adrian 74, DePue 61

Alma 70, Albion 54

Aquinas 66, Michigan-Deerborn 61

Evansville 88, Bowling Green 84

Bethel (Minn.) 78, Augsburg 67

Central Michigan 84, Culver-Stocker 77

DePue 61, Carroll (Wis.) 65

Detroit 85, Cleveland 84

Duquesne 71, Hastings 56

Evansville 88, Bowling Green 84

Gustavus 69, St. Mary's (Minn.) 62

Hamline 51, Carleton 58

UJ 77, Calvin 72

Michigan 76, Milwaukee 77

Indiana 59, N. Iowa 67

St. 86, Oklahoma 82

St. 86, Oklahoma 82

St. 86, Oklahoma 82

St. 86, Oklahoma 82

St. 86, Oklahoma 82

St. 86, Oklahoma 82

St. 86, Oklahoma 82

St. 86, Oklahoma 82

St. 86, Oklahoma 82

St. 86, Oklahoma 82

St. 86, Oklahoma 82

St. 86, Oklahoma 82

St. 86, Oklahoma 82

St. 86, Oklahoma 82

St. 86, Oklahoma 82

St. 86, Oklahoma 82

Wednesday's women's scores

EAST
Albany (NY) 72, Troy Brook 65

Caldwell 66, Wilmington (Del.) 64

Dominican (NY) 78, Holy Family 71

Duke 87, Pittsburgh 52

Farmingdale 74, Poughkeepsie 61

Hartford 84, Mass.-Lowell 73

Long Island (NY) 76, Westbury 51

NY City 81, Stonington 67

NY State 76, Westchester 67

Post (Conn.) 81, Chestnut Hill 63

Quinnipiac 68, Marist 73, OT

Scranton 84, Susquehanna 73

St. Bonaventure 77, Fordham 61

St. John's 81, Stonham 61

UMBC 52, UCF 53

UMBC 52, Maine 67

UMass 86, La Salle 79, OT

Vermont 91, Dartmouth 78

West Virginia 86, Xavier 65

SOUTH
Carson-Newman (TN), Tusculum 86

Davidson 72, George Washington 45

Florida 71, Mississippi 45

Furman 73, Chattanooga 65

George Mason 81, Saint Joseph's 79

George College 88, Clayton 54

Georgia College 60, Notre Dame 53

Kentucky Wesleyan 81, Salem International 67

Lees-McRae 76, King (Tenn.) 74

Louisville 73, Florida 73

Mount Union 76, Barton 52

North Carolina 73, Transylvania 64

Nicholls 85, McKee 61

Spaulding 69, Blackburn 65, OT

Union College 76, Augusta 61

Union (Ky.) 97, Allen 80

Virginia Tech 66, Wake Forest 75

Washington & Lee, E. Mennonite 82

Westford 63, Harvard 76

MIDWEST
Adrian 74, DePue 61

Alma 70, Albion 54

Aquinas 66, Michigan-Deerborn 61

Evansville 88, Bowling Green 84

Bethel (Minn.) 78, Augsburg 67

Central Michigan 84, Culver-Stocker 77

DePue 61, Carroll (Wis.) 65

Detroit 85, Cleveland 84

HIGH SCHOOL: DODEA PACIFIC

Yokota's Bailey back with new perspective

Health scare during holidays
'made me look at my future'

By DAVE ORNAUER
Stars and Stripes

Things were tracking quite nicely for Jamia Bailey two months ago.

In her senior season as a Yokota guard, she was averaging 13.2 points. 3.7 assists and 5.8 steals per game as her Panthers won their first six games by an average of 24.7 points.

Her goal of winning four straight Far East Division II titles seemed well within reach.

But along came December, a couple of sub-par games ... then the diagnosis that not only appeared to threaten her final season, but made Jamia and her family wonder if her life might be in danger.

Bailey was diagnosed with a collapsed vein and blood clot in her left pelvic region, which required a journey to Tripler Army Medical Center in Hawaii, the place of her birth, for two emergency procedures and a long while spent reflecting over the holiday period.

"It was shocking at first," Bailey said. "When I first heard 'blood clot,' I thought there goes the season and my goal, and I was scared because I want to play in college. It made me look at my future and everything I want to do, I'm probably not going to be able to do."

A three-spot star, Bailey has five Far East D-II titles to her credit, two in volleyball and three in basketball. Bailey calls herself a physical player, no matter what sport (she also plays soccer), and says the whole episode made her wonder how or when it happened.

"That's just how I play," Bailey said.

That she'd had a clot made her question "the amount of times I dove saving balls, jumping, leaping, playing teams like Kadena and (American School In Japan), I was thinking how lucky I was that it (clot) didn't dislodge and move where it doesn't need to be."

According to headline.com, a blood clot is dangerous in that no matter where it forms, it can break loose and move to other parts of the body, including the lungs, causing a pulmonary embolism.

"It's the most dangerous thing in the world," said Jamia's father, James, who coached her last season with the Panthers. It wasn't just basketball, but senior things, such as graduation, and her future that both he and his wife, Pia, a DODEA educator, were worried about.

"It was worried about her health. I would rather see her walking (at graduation) than to be wheeling anywhere," James Bailey said. "Mom was really upset, in tears when she first heard about it."

Even before Jamia said she'd noticed her leg swelling up, she'd been ill and saw limited action at Yokota's next two games, both wins. On Dec. 12, Jamia said, the swelling and pain "became too much for me."

A visit to Yokota hospital, a CT scan and Ultrasound revealed the clot. The family took her to Tripler on Dec. 17 and the first of two procedures took place on the 19th and the other on Christmas Eve.

By the time the family returned to Japan on New Year's Eve, "my leg was back to normal," Jamia said. "Definitely a happy New Year."

But with the new year came a new perspective.

"Anything can happen at any time, no matter how careful you are," she said. "Knowing that I'm an athlete, it's common in athletes. People have gone through it, they bounce back and still play, but you have to be careful."

All the while, her Panthers team tried to soldier on with their point guard. They escaped with a one-point win on Jan. 5 at their chief rival the past two years, Edgren, but then lost 51-39 the next day



DAVE ORNAUER/Stars and Stripes

Yokota senior guard Jamia Bailey has returned to the court after surgery to remove a blood clot in her left pelvic region.

to the Eagles with Bailey unable to play.

"My first thought was for her safety and her livelihood, and my second thought was for her emotional stability, to make sure she was still grounded and understood what was taking place," first-year Yokota coach Byron Wrenn said.

"We talked to her about getting healthy first. Not to be so intently focused on returning to the floor, but to get healthy. Next thing was to be realistic and allow her to talk about the possibility of returning to the floor. It's a dream of hers and I didn't want to put a damper on her dream."

Forwarded, Jamia and her parents said they're looking for her to continue succeeding on the court, while taking precautions during something as innocuous as a long bus trip to Iwakuni or Misawa.

For example, a few minutes spent getting out of a seat during a highway bus stop can make a difference, since blood clots can occur when seated for a long time. "When the bus stops, the kids need to get off the bus, stretch those legs out," James Bailey said.

"It's an eye opener, not just for her, but for all athletes. I would hate to see that come down on another athlete. It might not be the same result," he said. "She has to ease back into it. You have to know when to rest the body. You have to know when to say when."

Jamia returned to the court on Thursday, with the Panthers winning 32-31 over Seisen. Bailey scored five points, including the game-winning basket, and had a key steal and in the final moments. Her father said she felt fine afterward, but that her legs were sore.

Jamia says she still plans to chase the D-II goal, but to also mind her body's signs. At this point, she doesn't plan to play soccer, her physicians warned her that playing the ball off the head could result in new clots.

"If you have a talent and you're good, don't let it go to waste," she said. "Something could happen and you might not be able to pursue that dream. You never know what could happen. Give it everything you've got. It can all go away."

Weekend peek

Wrestlers get chance to see where they're at

By DAVE ORNAUER
Stars and Stripes

With a perfect 10-0 dual-meet regular season in hand, coach Gary Wilson and the Kinnick wrestling team now turn their attention to three upcoming tournaments in four weeks — the first one this Saturday.

The Kinnick Invitational "Beast of the Far East" Tournament kicks off at 9:30 a.m. Saturday. It's in its 25th year, in one form or another, since its inception in 1994. It returns to Kinnick after one year being held at Yokota.

As usual, the "Beast" serves as a dress rehearsal for the Far East tournament set for Feb. 1-3, also to be hosted by Kinnick.

But despite Kinnick's successes on the mat, Wilson said there's still a lot of work to be done before his Red Devils can call themselves ready for their state championship-equivalent tournament.

"We're not perfect," Wilson said, citing the Devils' loss to four-time defending Far East Division I champion St. Mary's in last month's Christian Academy Japan invitational. Kinnick had beaten the Titans 31-27 in an early season dual meet Nov. 22.

"We have a lot to prove," Wilson said. "We got lucky to face St. Mary's early in the season, but ... they improve from start to finish. It's hard to tell if we've kept pace with them. We haven't seen much of them."

Wilson says he also has an eye on Kubasaki, which holds the record for most Far East tournament titles, 25, but none since 2013. The Dragons are unbeaten against their island rivals, Kadena, thus far this season.

They (Dragons) have a lot of names I recognize and don't recognize, and both scare me,"

Wilson said. "It's going to be a battle."

Teams from Japan and Okinawa comprise most of the field, with Kinnick and Yokota fielding full lineups and St. Mary's, Perry and Kubasaki having 12 wrestlers each in tow.

Shonan Military Academy, a regular participant in "Beast," has a near-full lineup for the first time in awhile, Wilson said.

The Japanese school brings "good techniques and applications of techniques, which is always good," Wilson said. "It's like having a second St. Mary's in the tournament."

Also in attendance will be five wrestlers from Seoul American; the rest of the team, along with Osan and Humphreys, will wrestle a four-way dual-meet tournament at Daegu on Saturday.

Kadena and Kubasaki basketball continue their preparation for the Far East Division I Tournament later this month with a two-day exchange with Taipei American School on Saturday and Sunday.

It's the third year the Tigers have played the Dragons and Panthers in mid-January, and the second time Taipei American, a DODEA school until 1979, has traveled to Okinawa in the last three years. Games begin at 10 a.m. Saturday and Sunday at Kubasaki.

Also on the hardwood, in Korea, Daegu visits Humphreys, with the girls game looming as an important battle for seeding purposes in the Far East Division II Tournament later this month at Perry.

Guam's softball league opens Saturday with four games, including Guam High visiting John F. Kennedy.

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Game of the week

Wrestling
Kinnick Invitational 'Beast of the Far East' Tournament

When — 9:30 a.m. Saturday.

Where — Yokosuka Naval Base, Japan.

What — Dress rehearsal for the Far East tournament three weeks from now, also at Yokosuka. This year's "Beast" tournament features 127 total wrestlers, from host Kinnick, Yokota, Zama, Edgren, Perry, American School In Japan, defending champion St. Mary's, Christian Academy Japan, Shonan Military Academy, Kubasaki, Kadena and Seoul American. Only one wrestler per school can score team points per weight class.

Format — Modified double-elimination format, similar to the Far East tournament but without pool-play bouts. Knockout-bracketed wrestlers will wrestle back for second place if their only loss was to the champion wrestler.

Wrestlers to watch — The tournament will feature three defending "Beast" champions: Lucas Wirth (won at 129, now wrestling at 129) and Devoney Stanley (129, 135) of Kinnick and St. Mary's Ryo Osawa (141, 158). Wirth is a two-time Far East champion. Other former Far East champions wrestling at "Beast" are St. Mary's Tatsuhito Matsumoto (122) and Rio Lemkul (129) and Kadena's Demetrio Delarosa (129).

— Stars and Stripes

HIGH SCHOOL: DODEA EUROPE/NBA



WILLIAM HOWARD/Stars and Stripes

Lakenheath's Asha Snipes defends against Naples' Jada Williamson, left, during a varsity game at RAF Lakenheath, England, last month. Williamson contributed nine points to the Wildcats' victory.

Weekend peek

Holiday break gives way to bus trip schedule

By GREGORY BROOME
Stars and Stripes

A long holiday break gives way to a bustling schedule of basketball, wrestling and marksmanship this weekend as DODEA Europe resumes its winter sports season.

This weekend's action is the first in more than a month, save for a handful of mid-week basketball matchups and non-sanctioned holiday events. Wrestling, marksmanship and most basketball teams have been sidelined since Dec. 9.

But those teams won't enjoy a soft landing as they resume their seasons. This weekend's full-fledged schedule drops its participants directly back into the heated regular-season races they faced on the other side of the holiday hiatus.

Twenty-two schools will play basketball this weekend at 10 sites across England, Germany, Italy and the Netherlands. The slate includes rematches of 2017 European championship games as well as a four-team gathering of Division III opponents.

The defending Division I girls champion Stuttgart Panthers visit Ramstein, to which they trounced 36-8 in last year's title game, on Friday and Saturday. The Panthers sport the holidays stuck on an unusual one-game losing streak, having fallen to Naples to end the 2017 portion of their schedule. The Royals, too, took a loss on the final pre-holiday weekend, playing Lakenheath to a Friday-Saturday doubleheader split.

Naples, having recorded its signature regular-season win, will play an all-Italy schedule down the stretch, starting this weekend at American Overseas School of Rome.

The boys basketball schedule is highlighted by a rematch of the last two Division II championship games. Rota beat Black Forest

Academy for the 2016 crown; BFA reversed that decision in 2017.

The Friday and Saturday tips at BFA represent the first divisional games of the season for both squads. Rota was impressive in December with blowout wins over Vicenza and Sigonella, while BFA has scraped to a 1-3 start against all Division I opposition.

In Division III, Brussels hosts small-school foes Alconbury, Ansbach and Sigonella in a preview of the European tournament, set for all three divisions Feb. 21-24 at Wiesbaden.

Wrestling mats will roll out again Saturday at Kaiserslautern, Stuttgart and Vicenza, with 20 schools spread out across the three meets.

Reigning Division I dynasty Stuttgart welcomes archrival Ramstein to town as part of its six-team event, while Kaiserslautern hosts large-school hopefuls Lakenheath, SHAPE and Wiesbaden in its seven-team field. Germany programs Vilseck and Hohenfels travel south to join DODEA Europe's five Italian programs in northern Italy.

This Saturday's action marks the start of a four-weekend stretch run to the postseason, which includes sectional qualifiers Feb. 10 and the championship meet Feb. 16-17 at Wiesbaden.

Marksmanship, meanwhile, is fast approaching its final meet, the first scheduled championship event of the 2018 DODEA Europe calendar. This weekend's schedule is comprised of two postal meets, in which each participating team competes remotely at its home facility and reports its results for compilation. Saturday's shooting, along with conventional meets on Jan. 20 and 27, will finalize the field for the European championships set for Feb. 3 at Kaiserslautern.

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Scoreboard

Eastern Conference				
Atlantic Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	33	10	.767	—
Toronto	28	11	.718	3
Philadelphia	19	19	.500	9
New York	19	22	.463	13
Brooklyn	15	26	.366	17
Southeast Division				
Miami	24	17	.585	—
Washington	23	18	.561	1
Charlotte	15	24	.385	8
Orlando	12	18	.400	9
Atlanta	11	30	.268	13
Central Division				
Cleveland	16	14	.556	—
Detroit	22	18	.550	4
Milwaukee	22	19	.536	4
Indiana	21	20	.512	5 1/2
Chicago	15	27	.357	12

Western Conference				
Southwest Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Houston	29	11	.725	—
San Antonio	28	14	.667	2
New Orleans	20	20	.500	9
Dallas	15	28	.349	15 1/2
Memphis	13	27	.325	16
Northwest Division				
Minnesota	27	16	.628	—
Portland	22	19	.537	4
Oklahoma City	21	23	.479	4 1/2
Denver	20	21	.488	5
Utah	17	24	.415	9
Pacific Division				
Golden State	33	9	.786	—
L.A. Clippers	19	21	.473	13
Phoenix	16	24	.400	17
Sacramento	13	27	.325	19
L.A. Lakers	13	27	.325	19

Wednesday's games				
Dallas 115, Charlotte 106				
Miami 114, Indiana 106				
Utah 107, Washington 104				
Chicago 122, New York 119				
Detroit 114, Brooklyn 80				
Houston 121, Portland 112				
Memphis 105, New Orleans 102				
Minnesota 110, Orlando 103				
Minnesota 104, Oklahoma City 88				
Atlanta 110, Denver 97				
L.A. Clippers 125, Golden State 106				

Thursday's games				
Boston vs. Philadelphia at London				
Cleveland at Toronto				
L.A. Clippers at Sacramento				
San Antonio at L.A. Lakers				

Friday's games				
Cleveland at Charlotte				
Orlando at Washington				
Brooklyn at Atlanta				
Golden State at Milwaukee				
Phoenix at Chicago				
Portland at New Orleans				
Golden State at Denver				
Houston at Phoenix				

Saturday's games				
L.A. Lakers at Dallas				
Sacramento at L.A. Clippers				
Phoenix at Oklahoma City				
Brooklyn at Washington				
Golden State at Toronto				
Detroit at Chicago				
Denver at San Antonio				

Sunday's games				
Milwaukee at Miami				
Portland at New York				
Indiana at Phoenix				
Portland at Minnesota				

Leaders				
Scoring	FG	FT	PTS	AVG
Harden, HOU	35	334	319	11.32
Antetokounmpo, MIL	38	400	272	10.89
James, CLE	38	400	272	10.89
Durant, OKC	34	321	166	8.94
Curry, GSW	34	321	166	8.94
Davis, NOR	34	319	214	8.75
Curry, GSW	34	319	214	8.75
Westbrook, OKC	42	239	213	10.54
Lillard, POR	34	274	206	8.50
Booker, PHX	32	266	179	7.86
Oladipo, IND	36	318	156	8.85
Curry, GSW	36	318	156	8.85
Embiid, PHL	29	237	189	6.89
Curry, GSW	29	237	189	6.89
Beal, WAS	41	351	169	9.68
Williams, LAC	39	283	214	8.93
Curry, GSW	39	283	214	8.93
Walker, CHA	37	274	170	8.08

Rebounds				
FG	FT	PTS	AVG	
OKC	178	424	602	15.0
Jordan, LAC	168	385	571	15.0
Cousins, NOR	40	823	413	14.92
Howard, CLE	39	823	413	14.92
Towns, MIN	43	118	534	15.19
Curry, GSW	43	118	534	15.19
Embiid, PHL	29	63	252	13.5
Davis, NOR	34	80	271	13.5
John, DEN	34	80	271	13.5

Assists				
FG	FT	PTS	AVG	
Westbrook, OKC	42	239	213	10.54
James, CLE	38	400	272	10.89
Waller, WAS	30	372	91	9.1
Williams, LAC	40	359	90	9.0
Curry, GSW	36	318	156	8.85
Simmons, PHL	37	276	75	7.5
Curry, GSW	37	276	75	7.5
Ball, LAL	34	242	7.1	7.1
Lowry, TOR	38	265	7.0	7.0

Calendar				
Feb. 8	Trade deadline.			
Feb. 16-18, 2018	All-Star weekend, Los Angeles.			
April 11	Regular Season ends.			
May 1	Debut year.			
May 31	NBA Finals begin.			
June 21	NBA Draft.			

Around the NBA

Managing minutes

Restrictions on playing time a 'pain in the neck'

By BRIAN MAHONEY
Associated Press

Isaiah Thomas' debut with Cleveland last week came with the same rules as when Kawhi Leonard rejoined the Spurs.

His coach could use him, just not too much.

Both were playing under the dreaded minute restrictions, which coaches learn to accept but will never learn to love.

"It really is a pain in the neck," said Antonio's Gregg Popovich said.

Popovich has dealt with this season with Leonard, Tony Parker and Danny Green. In their cases, as well as Thomas, Philadelphia's Joel Embiid and others returning from injuries, the team's medical staff gives the coach guidelines for how much workload they can handle and how often — a challenge even for a coach who's been at the forefront of resting players.

"It's difficult because it's very strange to try to figure out rotations. You can't do it," Popovich said. "You want to put somebody on the court, but you can't because of minutes, so you put somebody else on the court that shouldn't be on the court based on matchups and how they're going to react to it. It's not as simple as you want to be so aggressively or offensively. So it's really a mishmash."

It hinders teams trying to develop a rhythm, but also affects the individual players by slowing the rebuilding of their conditioning once they return. That's what Minnesota's Tom Thibodeau faced in Chicago when Derrick Rose came back from the knee injuries that hampered him in his final years, causing friction between a front office and coach that weren't on the same page.

"Sometimes you have older players, so you'll cut their minutes back. Sometimes you have younger players so you're going to play them more," Thibodeau said. "If a guy's coming off injury, you want to see where he is first, and then you can start to ease him in. So pacing a team, I think only the head coach really has an understanding of where you are with the team."

Popovich doesn't try to work out the math to maximize the minutes, joking that he can't add or subtract minutes.

"We all get like 14 assistants, don't we?" Popovich said. "And they're all around and, 'So and so's got to come out, he's played seven minutes straight, and you're a minute and a half over.'"

That's the middle game of a DeMar DeRozan in a sizzling stretch of what might be the best season of his career.

"He's kind of in that kind of money zone right now, just playing great basketball," Brooklyn coach Kenny Atkinson said.

Just wait a couple years. DeMar DeRozan is in a sizzling stretch of what might be the best season of his career.



MURRAY GASH/AP

Toronto's DeMar DeRozan is playing some of the best basketball of his career recently, and was named Eastern Conference player of the week for the third time this season last week, averaging a league-best 35.7 points.

thinks DeRozan's best is yet to come, as he grows more confident in the three-point shot he's shooting with confidence this season.

DeRozan scored a franchise-record 52 points during a Jan. 1 victory over Milwaukee and went on to win Eastern Conference player of the week for the third time this season, averaging a league-best 35.7 points. Long a mid-range shooter, he's comfortably launched from farther back in his ninth season and is hitting 37 percent behind the arc.

Casey recalls Kobe Bryant saying his best basketball came more than a decade into his career, and he sees a similarity with DeRozan.

"I think DeMar's years are way ahead in front of him. He's going to continue to get better," Casey said. "I just see him transforming his game, probably more three-point shots as much as anything else as he gets older, and so many guys in our league have done that."

Holiday hoops: It lacks the hype of the Christmas schedule, but the Martin Luther King Jr. slate might be better.

That's the middle game of a tri-pleheader on TNT that's capped by Chris Paul's first game at Staples Center against the Clippers since Houston acquired him in the summer.

Stat line of the week

Manu Ginobili, Spurs: With 26 points Sunday in a loss at Portland, Ginobili joined Jabbar Jordan, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, John Stockton and Robert Parish as only players 40 or older to score 25 points in a game.

NHL

Buffalo gets glimpse of future

Mittelstadt shows Sabres his offensive potential during world juniors

By JOHN WAWROW

Associated Press

A funny thing happened when the offensively challenged Sabres left town for two weeks to make way for the world junior hockey championship.

Buffalo's win-starved hockey fans got a promising glimpse into the future thanks to Casey Mittelstadt. The 19-year-old forward from Eden Prairie, Minn., earned tournament MVP honors while keying the United States' run to a bronze medal.

"You have to find hope and positive energy from a performance such as Casey's," Sabres general manager Jason Botterill told The Associated Press on Tuesday.

"With it being here in Buffalo, there was that added pressure," Botterill added. "And I think you saw a player who instead of succumbing to the pressure, actually thriving in that type of environment."

Mittelstadt, selected by the Sabres with the eighth pick in last year's draft, finished tied for the tournament lead with 11 points (four goals, seven assists) in seven games. And the University of Minnesota freshman punctuated his visit by scoring a highlight-reel goal in a 3-2 preliminary-round loss to Slovakia.

With Team USA trailing 2-1, Mittelstadt stripped the puck from Marian Studenec at the Slovakia blue line and circled back into the zone. Mittelstadt kicked the puck between his legs to avoid a check by defender Michal Ivan and didn't break stride in cutting across the top of the crease and avoiding goalie Roman Duray. He swept a shot into the open left side with 3:11 remaining.

That was nothing, said U.S. captain Joey Anderson, who grew up playing with Mittelstadt.

"He's got a whole arsenal of fun stuff to watch," Anderson said. "When we were younger, he'd pull stuff out of his hat that were awesome moves."

Botterill laughed when asked how many times he replayed the goal.

"What I was really impressed about that goal was certainly it was a beautiful, beautiful hockey play, but it was the timing of it," Botterill said. "Here was a scenario where he was trying to give his team a spark in a crucial situation. I think that's certainly what we need here in Buffalo."

Ah yes, the Sabres, a team mired in last place in the Eastern Conference standings and in jeopardy of extending its franchise-worst playoff drought to seven seasons. Buffalo has a league-worst 92 goals, scoring one or fewer goals 14 times, including five shutouts.

Botterill thinks it will still be some time before Mittelstadt lines up alongside Buffalo's cur-



PHOTOS BY NATHAN DENETTE, THE CANADIAN PRESS/AP

United States forward Casey Mittelstadt, left, and Russia forward Mikhail Maltsev vie for the puck during the first period of a quarterfinal on Jan. 2 in the IIHF world junior hockey championships in Buffalo, N.Y. The hometown Sabres took Mittelstadt with the eighth pick in last year's draft.

rent U.S. star, Jack Eichel.

Botterill wants Mittelstadt to continue developing at the college level and will wait until Minnesota's season ends before meeting the player to discuss his future, including the potential of signing an NHL contract.

Mittelstadt said the thought of one day playing in the Sabres' home arena as an NHLer crossed his mind, though he was more focused on the tournament and then getting back to Minnesota. Two days after the U.S. beat the Czech Republic 9-3 in the bronze-medal game, Mittelstadt was back on the ice for the Golden Gloves in a 2-0 win over top-ranked St. Cloud State.

Empty seats

The world juniors served as

a cautionary tale to the International Ice Hockey Federation, USA Hockey and even the NHL for flooding one region with too many major events.

Citing poor attendance figures in Buffalo, IIHF President Rene Fasel acknowledged organizers over-estimated how many times the tournament can be held in the same geographical area.

The 2018 tournament drew 211,210 fans, including a world junior record of 44,592 for an outdoor game between the U.S. and Canada played at the stadium of the NFL's Buffalo Bills.

Though the turnout ranks 10th overall, the attendance was nearly 120,000 fewer than when Buffalo hosted the 2011 world juniors.

One reason was the Canadian loonie being some 20 cents lower

than the U.S. dollar this time. Another concern was the tournament being held for the fourth time in seven years in either Buffalo or Toronto, which are about 110 miles apart.

Add to that, Toronto hosted the 2016 World Cup of Hockey and the outdoor Centennial Classic last winter.

"It shows us that in the future we should be a little bit more careful," Fasel said. "Sometimes you can overdo saturation."

Next year's tournament will be co-hosted by Vancouver and Victoria, British Columbia.

World Cup talk

NHL Players' Association chief Donald Fehr told the AP that the union and the NHL have had very preliminary discussions over staging another World Cup. Fehr said the tournament came up when the two sides discussed developing a long-term international calendar.

"I think we're a ways away from that, but I'm hopeful we'll be able to come to grips with that sometime in the next several months," Fehr said.

Slumping

Aside from the Sabres, who have won consecutive games just once this season, the Canucks are 2-11-2 in their previous 15 following a 3-1 loss at Washington on Tuesday.

Streaking

The Bruins entered their five-day break on an 8-0-3 roll following a 6-5 overtime loss at Pittsburgh on Sunday. Boston's 17-3-3 in its past 23.

Scoreboard

Eastern Conference

Atlantic Division						
Team	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF/GA
Tampa Bay	43	21	9	3	65	107
Boston	40	23	10	7	53	131/102
Toronto	45	25	17	3	53	146/131
Florida	42	18	19	6	42	120/137
Montreal	42	18	20	4	40	108/129
Ottawa	42	15	18	9	39	117/149
Buffalo	43	10	24	9	29	86/150

Metropolitan Division

Team	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF/GA
Washington	40	21	13	5	57	135/121
Columbus	44	25	16	3	53	121/121
New Jersey	41	22	11	8	52	130/125
N.Y. Rangers	42	22	15	5	49	128/111
Pittsburgh	44	22	19	3	47	126/138
Carolina	42	19	15	8	46	119/131
Philadelphia	42	19	15	8	46	123/122
N.Y. Islanders	43	21	18	4	46	146/158

Western Conference

Central Division						
Team	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF/GA
Winnipeg	44	26	11	7	59	151/121
Nashville	44	25	12	7	56	133/114
St. Louis	46	26	17	3	55	134/122
Dallas	43	24	16	3	51	132/118
Minnesota	44	23	17	4	50	127/121
Chicago	43	21	16	6	48	134/118
Colorado	41	22	16	3	47	135/124

Pacific Division
 Vegas 42 29 19 3 60 143/113
 Los Angeles 42 24 13 5 53 126/99
 San Jose 40 21 13 6 48 110/106
 Calgary 42 22 16 4 48 118/121
 Anaheim 41 19 15 9 47 117/120
 Edmonton 44 18 23 3 39 115/143
 Vancouver 43 16 21 6 38 111/143
 Arizona 43 10 27 6 26 98/150

Notes: Two points for a win, one point for overtime loss. Top three teams in each division and two wild cards per conference advance to playoffs.

Tuesday's games
 Winnipeg 7, Buffalo 4
 Washington 3, Vancouver 1
 Chicago 8, Ottawa 2
 Tampa Bay 5, Carolina 4
 Nashville 2, Edmonton 1
 Calgary 3, Minnesota 2, OT

Wednesday's games
 Ottawa 4, Toronto 3
 Minnesota 2, Chicago 1
 Carolina 3, Washington 1
 Columbus at Buffalo
 Calgary at Florida

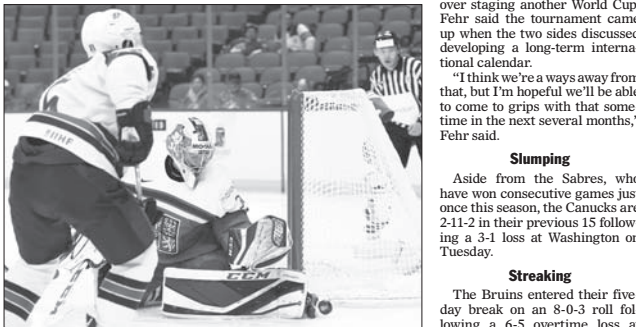
Friday's games
 Vancouver at Columbus
 Calgary at Florida
 Washington at Carolina
 Nashville at New Jersey
 Philadelphia at New York
 Dallas at St. Louis
 Colorado at Dallas
 Edmonton at Vegas
 Arizona at San Jose
 Anaheim at Los Angeles

Leaders

Goal scoring		GP	G
Name, Team			
Nikita Kucherov, Tampa Bay		43	21
Alex Ovechkin, Washington		43	27
Connor McDavid, Edmonton		42	23
Sean Couturier, Philadelphia		42	23
Brock Boeser, Vancouver		44	19
William Karlsson, Vegas		41	22
John Tavares, N.Y. Islanders		43	22
Tyler Segen, Dallas		43	21
Sean Monahan, Calgary		42	20
Leon Draisaitl, Edmonton		43	20
Patrick Leino, Winnipeg		44	19
Adam Matthews, Toronto		44	19
Eric Staal, Minnesota		44	19
Vladimir Tarasenko, St. Louis		46	19
James van Riemsdijk, Toronto		43	18
Michael Ferland, Calgary		41	18
Patrick Kane, Chicago		43	18
Nathan MacKinnon, Colorado		37	18
James Neal, Vegas		41	18

Short-handed goals		GP	SH
Name, Team			
Aleksander Barkov, Florida		43	4
Devon Gibbin, New Jersey		41	3
Evander Kane, Buffalo		43	3
Blake Comeau, Colorado		31	2
T.J. Compher, Colorado		31	2
Logan Couture, San Jose		36	2
Leif Broberg, Minnesota		20	2
Leon Draisaitl, Edmonton		40	2
David Frolik, Calgary		37	2
Calie Jankiro, Nashville		42	2
Tyler Johnson, Tampa Bay		42	2
William Karlsson, Vegas		43	2
Dylan Larkin, Detroit		41	2
Travis Nielsen, Detroit		41	2
Brayden Point, Tampa Bay		43	2
Bryan Rust, Pittsburgh		38	2
Eric Staal, Minnesota		44	2
Derek Stepan, Arizona		43	2
Chris Tierney, San Jose		40	2
Vincent Trocheck, Florida		42	2

Plus/minus		GP	+/-
Name, Team			
Victor Hedman, Tampa Bay		43	4
Jaden Schwartz, St. Louis		30	23
Anton Stralman, Tampa Bay		41	22
Drew Doughty, Los Angeles		42	22
Brayden Point, Tampa Bay		43	21
Patrice Bergeron, Boston		35	20
Zdeno Chára, Boston		40	20
William Karlsson, Vegas		43	20
Brad Marchand, Boston		32	19
Reilly Smith, Vegas		41	19
Steven Stamkos, Tampa Bay		43	19
Joey Manson, Anaheim		43	18
Dustin Brown, Los Angeles		42	17



There were plenty of empty seats during Friday's bronze-medal game between the United States and the Czech Republic.

OLYMPICS



MATTHIAS SCHRADER/AP

Ryom Tae Ok and Kim Ju Sik of North Korea compete during the pairs free program at the Figure Skating-ISU Challenger Series in Oberstdorf, Germany in September. South Korea said on Tuesday that North Korea has agreed to send a delegation that would include officials, athletes, cheerleaders and journalists to next month's Winter Olympics in the Pyeongchang in the South.

Figure skaters might lead North Korea team

Pairs Ryom-Kim are only athletes who have qualified

By JAMES ELLINGWORTH
Associated Press

They're the friendly face of North Korea, and it looks like they're coming south to the Olympics.

With sparkling costumes and winning smiles, figure skaters Ryom Tae Ok and Kim Ju Sik could lead the North Korean team in Pyeongchang, South Korea, next month after their government said Tuesday it would send athletes to the Winter Games.

Ryom and Kim are the only North Korean athletes who have qualified for the Feb. 9-25 Olympics in Pyeongchang so far. However, the International Olympic Committee could potentially hold extra invitational spots open to symbolize togetherness between the two Koreas.

Ryom and Kim almost certainly won't win a medal in the fiercely competitive world of pairs skating, but they've already won friends against a backdrop of political tension.

On their world championship debut last year in Finland, Ryom and Kim put in two spirited skates to enthusiastic applause from the crowd as they finished 15th, above one of the two U.S. pairs and a string of more experienced European competitors. They weren't afraid to show their feelings, either. The 18-year-old Ryom punched the air with joy on finishing the short program to a Jeff Beck cover of The Beatles classic "A Day in the Life."

Ryom and her partner, Kim, embraced in their matching silver-and-black costumes before soaking up the crowd's cheers and skating off to celebrate with their coaches. Rarely seen abroad, they have given little away about their lives, other than that

they train in the North Korean capital, Pyongyang. At the world championships, Kim said he was keen to take part in "a big competition" when asked about the Olympics through a translator from his team. They wouldn't talk about visiting South Korea and walked away when asked about their choice of music.

North Korea was far from certain to compete in Pyeongchang. It boycotted the only other Olympics hosted in South Korea, the Seoul Games of 1988, and often has skipped the Winter Olympics entirely.

It hasn't won a winter medal since 1992 and its last team, in 2010, consisted of just one figure skater and one speed skater, neither of whom came close to the podium.

By contrast, North Korea punches above its weight in the Summer Olympics. It won seven medals across weightlifting, gymnastics, shooting and table tennis in 2016.

Even with a deal for North Korea to compete in Pyeongchang, the two Koreas and the IOC face some thorny issues of protocol.

Flags, anthems and the opening ceremony all will require delicate negotiation.

At the Games themselves, any slip-up could spark a diplomatic incident. The North Korean women's soccer team walked off the field at the 2012 Olympics when the South Korean flag was mistakenly shown in a pre-game video package.

North and South Korean athletes have marched together at some previous Olympics during periods of warmer relations between the two governments, and South Korea has suggested a repeat in Pyeongchang. If they march separately, the South Korean team would massively outnumber the North Koreans.

Commentary

The North Koreans are coming; Russians, too

By TIM DAHLBERG
Associated Press

The North Koreans are coming, a surprising development that adds a bit of intrigue to the Winter Olympics.

The Russians are coming, too, and probably in greater numbers than most suspected in the wake of an official ban for running a doping scheme that riled a mockery of the last games in Sochi.

No, they won't wear Russian uniforms, and the country's medal count won't be tallied on the big board in Pyeongchang. There will be no playing of the Russian national anthem should they win gold medals, which they surely will.

Yes, the Russians will be in South Korea, despite an official ban of the country from the Olympics. The only real question now is how many cheaters will be among them.

Forty-two of the 43 Russian athletes given lifetime Olympic bans for doping at the 2014 Winter Games have appealed to the Court of Arbitration for Sport, hoping still to be allowed to compete at next month's Olympics. Their appeals have been fast-tracked, with the cases to be heard beginning Jan. 22 with verdicts issued by Jan. 31.

Among them is speed skater Olga Fatkulina, who just last weekend won gold in the women's team sprint at the European Championships. Another banned skater, Alexander Rumyantsev, won two silver medals in the competition held in Kolomna, Russia.

Both were part of the Russian team in Sochi that dominated the medal counts for all the wrong reasons. Russians won 33 medals in all, a number that has officially now been reduced to 20 after Olympic officials stripped many medal winners for their participation in the doping scheme.

That both are still competing in major competitions — and could conceivably still compete in Pyeongchang — is yet another reminder of the difficulties of eliminating a drug culture that has long been pervasive in international sports.

The Russian ban is not really a ban at all, no matter how the Court of Arbitration for Sport rules on the banned athletes. Russia already won a concession to have its athletes referred to as "Olympic Athlete from

Russia," or "OAR" and you can be sure the Russian medals will be tallied, whether officially or not.

The head of Russia's Olympic committee last month said there could be 200 Russians competing in South Korea, not that far off from the 232 that competed for the home country in the 2014 Olympics in Sochi.

They may not hear their anthem or see their flag, but they're still competing for their country. And they will win enough medals to make their presence known.

That's a problem, because the Russians have already demonstrated that they will do anything they can to win medals. They won so many of them in Sochi that they led the medal count, thanks in part to an elaborate state sponsored system of rigging drug tests in the Sochi anti-doping laboratory.

Whatever Russian athletes do in Pyeongchang will be suspect, no matter what uniform they're wearing. And that does a disservice to the athletes competing against them, who will have to wonder if they are on a level playing field.

The viewing public also has a right to be suspicious. The Winter Olympics are the ultimate showcase for ice and snow sports, but viewers might start tuning out if they believe the competitions themselves are too flawed to be fair.

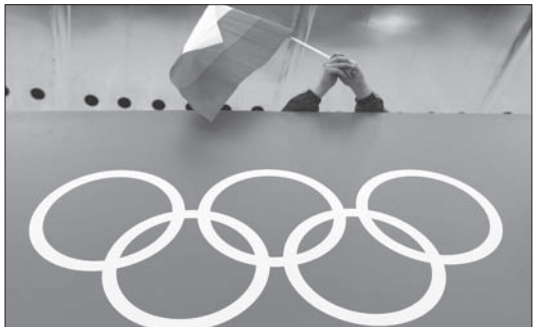
The good news for South Korean organizers is there will be another storyline to distract from the Russian scandal. That will be the inclusion of a few North Korean athletes in a rare rapprochement between the two countries.

Unlike the Russians, the North Koreans won't win any medals. Figure skating team Ryom Tae Ok and Kim Ju Sik are the only athletes who have qualified for the Games from their country, though a few others could be invited as a goodwill measure by the International Olympic Committee.

Bringing the two Koreas together, even if it is only for show, is a good thing. There's a lot at stake on the Korean peninsula that goes far beyond sports, even at highest level of the Olympics.

The North Koreans should be there, even if just a few athletes actually get to cross the border.

The Russians, meanwhile, should have just been told to stay home.



DAVID J. PHILLIP/AP

A Russian skating fan holds the country's national flag over the Olympic rings during the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia. The Court of Arbitration for Sport has received 42 appeals from Russian athletes against Olympic doping bans.

OLYMPICS



PHOTOS BY MARCO TREVATI/AP

American Mikaela Shiffrin competes in a World Cup slalom in Flachau, Austria, on Tuesday. Four years ago, after the Sochi Games, Shiffrin set a goal of winning five gold medals.

Shiffrin out to make Olympic dream reality

After first Games, skier set goal of five gold medals

By ERIC WILLEMSSEN
Associated Press

Four years ago Mikaela Shiffrin had a “crazy” dream of winning five gold medals at the 2018 Olympics. That aim is seeming less and less unrealistic.

Just after becoming the youngest ever Olympic slalom champion at the Sochi Games, she then 18-year-old Shiffrin dreamed aloud “of the next Olympics (and) winning five gold medals.”

Right away she admitted her ambition “sounds really crazy.”

However, less than five weeks ahead of the Pyeongchang Olympics, that number seems more obtainable than ever before.

Shiffrin probably won't win that handful of gold medals, but mainly because she is unlikely to enter five different events in South Korea.

She will only decide on short notice which events she is going to enter at the Olympics.

Unlike at previous games, this time the technical races of GS and slalom are the first events on the women's Alpine Olympic schedule, enabling Shiffrin to compete in her core disciplines before making up her mind on possible starts

in the speed events of downhill and super-G, and the concluding combined and team events.

Developed into a potential winner of every race she competes in, and even triumphing for the first time in a downhill in December, Shiffrin has been dominating the Alpine skiing World Cup for months.

Her win in a slalom in Slovenia on Sunday was her ninth of the season, and seventh out of the last eight races, boosting her career total to 40.

That number leaves her one short of the all-time record for most World Cup wins by a 22-year-old, set by Austrian great Annemarie Moser-Proell in the 1970s.

With the World Cup season approaching the halfway mark, Shiffrin is leading the overall standings as well as every single discipline except for super-G, the only event she hasn't won yet.

Her season stats are even far exceeding her achievements from last year, when she became the third American female skier after Tamara McKinney and four-time champion Lindsey Vonn to win the overall title.

Though winning is not the only

thing Shiffrin is after.

“It's a good way to put it that I am not competing, I am just enjoying every turn that I make, to make every turn aggressive,” Shiffrin said. “Right now I am just enjoying that so much, the skiing, that it's even more important than the winning.”

Still, the wins keep piling up.

With 100 points for every victory, Shiffrin has racked up 1,281 World Cup points after 18 of this season's 38 races and looks set to break the record for the most World Cup points in a single season — 2,414 by retired Slovenian great Tina Maze, a record many deemed unbreakable.

In her main event, Shiffrin is not just winning, she is crushing the field. She triumphed in the past four slaloms by margins of 1.64, 0.89, 1.59 and again 1.64 seconds — a country mile in the sport.

Having won 20 of the last 25 slaloms she entered, it's hard to see past Shiffrin for gold at the Pyeongchang Games, even if the American doesn't regard herself beleaguered by any means.

“Every single (one) of the competitors can match,” she said. “That makes me even more motivated to keep moving forward.”



Mikaela Shiffrin is leading the overall standings, as well as every single discipline except for the super-G, with the Pyeongchang Olympics just five weeks away.

While a night race she won in Flachau on Tuesday was the penultimate slalom ahead of the Olympics, Shiffrin will be eager to keep her momentum going in weeks to come.

After Sunday's race, Frida Hansdotter of Sweden praised the American for “taking the sport to

another level.”

But Shiffrin, who usually refrains from keeping track of her records and statistics, said “it doesn't feel like it's something crazy that's happening.”

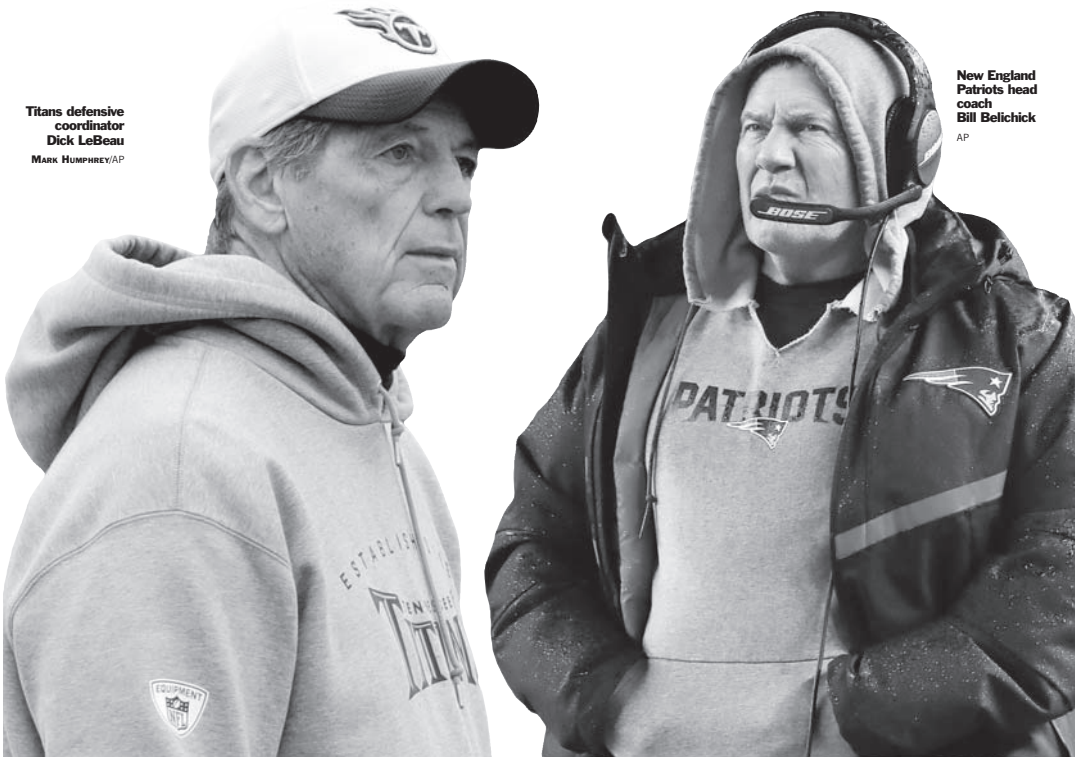
This time, she said, “it's not like dreaming. And that's really cool.”

NFL PLAYOFFS

MEETING OF THE MASTERMINDS

Titans defensive coordinator Dick LeBeau
MARK HUMPHREY/AP

New England Patriots head coach Bill Belichick
AP



Titans' LeBeau, Pats' Belichick factor into which team plays for AFC title

By TERESA M. WALKER
Associated Press

DNASHVILLE, Tenn. — Coach LeBeau vs. Bill Belichick. Doesn't get much better than that for NFL fans. Tennessee linebacker Wesley Woodyard believes the rare matchup is a showdown for the ages.

"Oh man, it's going to be a battle of the masterminds," Woodyard said when the Titans defensive coordinator tries to outwit Belichick and his New England Patriots.

"Two Hall of Fame coaches, I'm sure Belichick will be there hands down. Coach LeBeau's seen a lot, coached a lot of playoff games, so we're relying heavily on his experience and to go out there and play hard man. That's all we can do for our coach."

Well, LeBeau is only in the Pro Football Hall of Fame for his 14-season career as a cornerback, though he certainly qualifies for consideration for designing the zone blitz on defense. LeBeau also has an NFL-record 45 consecutive seasons as a coach, putting him ahead of only one man

— Belichick with 43 — in that category.

The two will be very instrumental in determining the outcome on Saturday night when the upstart Titans (10-7) visit Belichick and his defending Super Bowl champion Patriots (13-3) for a spot in the AFC championship game.

And Belichick made it very clear that coaching against LeBeau is not something he enjoys.

"I wouldn't use that word, no," Belichick said. "It's very challenging. Coach LeBeau is a great coach, he does a tremendous job, (he) has for his entire illustrious career as a player and as a coach. Really revolutionized the game, and his system has certainly withstood the test of time."

Belichick ticked off how LeBeau's Titans have led the NFL in rushing defense over the past two seasons and led the league this season for the fewest big plays allowed of 20 yards or longer. Belichick says the foundation of LeBeau's defense remains the same over the years, modified for the players he has and the teams he's facing.

The man with five Super Bowl titles as head coach in New England made clear he has great respect for LeBeau, whom

he considers a good friend.

"He's such a great person, very humble guy that accomplished so much but he's very modest about it," Belichick said. "I learn an awful lot from watching him, watching his defenses and watching the way that he does things. Techniques and adjustments and schematics and so forth. He's one of the great coaches to ever walk the sidelines in this league."

Told that Belichick said he learned a lot from him, LeBeau said he was humbled.

"Not very many coaches have the record Coach Belichick's gotten, in fact he's probably closing in on the best ever," LeBeau said Wednesday. "That's quite a compliment."

The two haven't coached against each other in the playoffs but once before with Belichick overseeing the Patriots. LeBeau and the Pittsburgh Steelers won home-field advantage in 2004 by beating the Patriots 34-20 on Oct. 31, then Belichick and New England won the AFC conference championship Jan. 23, 2005, beating the Steelers 41-27.

"It'll be interesting to see how it comes out," LeBeau said.

LeBeau said preparing for a Belich-

ick-coached team means understanding the players won't beat themselves. Add in Tom Brady, one of the best quarterbacks ever to play the game makes the Patriots always a formidable opponent, according to LeBeau.

The Titans trust that LeBeau, who turned 80 the day before this season opened in September, will put them where they need to be. Titans linebacker Derrick Morgan said that's what LeBeau did in the second half of the Titans' upset of Kansas City 22-21 in the wild-card game. The Titans allowed only 61 yards total offense and no points in the final 30 minutes.

"He has all the experience in the world, probably been to 50 playoff games give or take," Morgan said. "We have a lot of confidence in him that he's going to put us in the right positions."

After kickoff, LeBeau said both coaches will be focused only on what's happening on the field.

"Once we walk on that field," LeBeau said, "we won't know who the hell's on the other side of the field to be honest with you."

Everyone else will know.

NFL PLAYOFFS

Eagles' Foles uses bye to learn basics

By Rob Maaddi
Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — Nick Foles used the bye week to go back to basics.

The Philadelphia Eagles (13-3) are the first No. 1 seed to open the playoffs as an underdog mainly because Foles is the starting quarterback instead of Carson Wentz.

But Foles hasn't lost confidence despite public perception that he

'The hardest things are the simplest things. Basically, get out of your own head and go play the game you know how to play.'

Nick Foles
Eagles QB

to do what I've been able to do. When I play my best and I'm most comfortable, I just go out there and play."

Foles has had success against defenses similar to Atlanta's. The Falcons employ a Cover-3 scheme as their base defense. The three deep zones are covered by two cornerbacks and the free safety. The Seahawks have excelled at it for several years. Of course, they have a world-class secondary.

Falcons coach Dan Quinn was Seattle's defensive coordinator when they won the Super Bowl four years ago.

Foles has never faced Quinn, but he beat the Jaguars in 2014

with the Eagles and in 2016 with the Chiefs. He beat the Seahawks in 2015 with St. Louis. Gus Bradley, who preceded Quinn as Seattle's defensive coordinator, was Jacksonville's coach in both games against Foles.

Foles is 65-for-105 (61.9 percent) for 842 yards with five touchdowns passes and one interception in those three games against Cover-3 defenses.

"You know where they are going to be. That's the thing with this defense," Eagles coach Doug Pederson said. "They play with a lot of confidence. It's an aggressive style. It's fast flow and they are not going to pull any punches.

"They are not going to try to trick you or do anything to get in your head or anything like that. It's just line up and try to beat us."

The Falcons don't blitz much but still get pressure on quarterbacks. They tied for 13th in the league with 39 sacks. Adrian Clayborn led the way with 9½ sacks.

Atlanta allowed 17.5 points per game over the final six games and then shut down the league's highest-scoring offense in a 26-13 win at the Los Angeles Rams.

Foles played well immediately after Wentz tore his ACL in Week 14. He was 20-for-48 for 279 yards with four touchdowns and no interceptions in his first five quarters versus 23-for-49 for 202 yards with one TD and two picks in the last five quarters.

"I haven't executed as well as I wanted to the past couple of weeks, but I go out there and play and having this time to self-scout, go through practice, you realize just go out there and play," Foles said.

"Maybe I wasn't doing that as much those last couple of games. It's as simple as that. Sometimes, the hardest things are the simplest things. Basically, get out of your own head and go play the game you know how to play."



New England Patriots defensive tackle Alan Branch takes questions from reporters in the team's locker room following practice Wednesday at Gillette Stadium, in Foxborough, Mass.

Mariota a big challenge for New England defense

Associated Press

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. — Safety Duron Harmon and his buddies on the New England defense know they have to deal with Marcus Mariota's "unique skill" set when the Tennessee Titans visit the Patriots for Saturday night's AFC divisional playoff game.

"He actually knows when to run and when to pass the ball when scrambling," Harmon said Wednesday.

"It's a very unique skill because a lot of guys once they get scrambling, they're not even looking downfield anymore, they're just looking to run. But he always has his eyes downfield — always knows when to run, when to throw the pass. I would say his touch on the ball, too, that gets people open when he's scrambling."

The Patriots have had their troubles with mobile quarterbacks this season — and there have even been not-so-mobile quarterbacks that have picked up yards on the ground against the defending champions.

Cam Newton and the Panthers beat them.

So did Kansas City's Alex Smith, though Smith didn't hurt them with his legs.

They beat rookie Deshaun Watson and the Texans, but Houston scored 33 points and Watson gained 41 yards on the ground.

The Patriots beat Tyrod Taylor and the Buffalo Bills twice and defeated Jameis Winston and Tampa Bay.

Mariota, who had an 87-yard touchdown run in 2015, his rookie season, ran for 60 yards on 10 carries in the regular-season finale. He picked up 46 yards on eight at-

Tennessee Titans at New England Patriots



TITANS (9-7)

(Regular-season statistics)

Team leaders

(Yards)

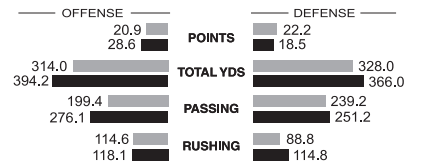


PATRIOTS (13-3)

Marcus Mariota	3,232	PASSING	Tom Brady	4,577
Derrick Henry	744	RUSHING	Dion Lewis	896
Delanie Walker	807	RECEIVING	Rob Gronkowski	1,084

Team comparison

Average per game



SOURCE: National Football League

AP

Atlanta Falcons at Philadelphia Eagles



FALCONS (10-6)

(Regular-season statistics)

Team leaders

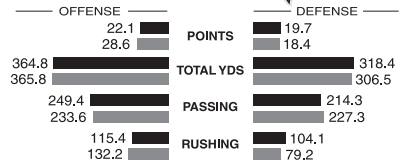


EAGLES (13-3)

Matt Ryan	4,095	PASSING	Carson Wentz	3,296
Devonta Freeman	865	RUSHING	LeGarrette Blount	766
Julio Jones	1,444	RECEIVING	Zach Ertz	824

Team comparison

Average per game



SOURCE: National Football League

AP

tempts in the playoff win over the Chiefs last Saturday.

Mariota had two touchdown passes in the wild-card game, one actually to himself as he caught a pass batted down by Darrelle Revis and took it into the end zone.

He finished off the comeback with a 22-yard TD pass to Eric Decker, but the pass/catch touchdown was enough to make Harmon think.

"It looked like it was meant for them to win," Harmon said. "That was ... first of all, that's a very, very hard play to make and that shows you his skill set, his athletic ability — to be able to throw the ball, have it knocked down and be

able to catch it where he caught it, and go in and run (on) a scoring dive, it shows his athletic ability. It shows that any time he touches the ball, he's dangerous."

Fellow safety Devin McCourty sees the same attributes in Mariota.

"It's not like if he stays in the pocket he can't make throws, but when he escapes outside the pocket and he has the ability to run and throw, you honestly really don't have a shot to stop him, I think," McCourty said.

Mariota was sixth in the NFL in third-down passer rating this season, a list headed by the Patriots' Tom Brady.

NFL PLAYOFFS

Steelers prep for heavy dose of run game

BY WILL GRAVES
Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — Technically it went into the scorebook as a 2-yard touchdown run.

The highly GIF-able reality told a more compelling story, one that served as the symbolic launch point for both the Jacksonville Jaguars' breakout season and the rookie running back at the center of it all.

The Jaguars were driving deep in Pittsburgh territory early in the second quarter at Heinz Field on Oct. 8.

On second down at the Steelers 2, Jacksonville quarterback Blake Bortles took the snap and stuffed the ball in Leonard Fournette's gut.

Fournette took two steps then vaulted into the air at the 4.

All 240 pounds of him sailed over the line of scrimmage and landed untouched at least a yard into the end zone.

Just like that, Fournette and the Jaguars arrived, making the Steelers believers in the process. "Fournette is good," said Steelers linebacker Bud Dupres, who then immediately corrected himself. "Fournette is great."

Yet for all of Fournette's breathtaking feats of athleticism — including a 90-yard bolt to the end zone that served as the exclamation point on Jacksonville's 30-9 victory three months ago, he's just part of a group that led the NFL in rushing.

While Pittsburgh (13-3) will be focusing on Fournette's No. 27 wherever he goes on Sunday when the Steelers host the Jaguars (11-



STEPHEN B. MORTON/AP

Jaguars running back Leonard Fournette, right, is stopped by the Bills on Sunday. The Steelers will be focusing on Fournette in this week's divisional playoff game.

6) in the divisional round of the playoffs, they're well aware they can't take the other players in the backfield lightly.

Sure, Fournette finished with 1,040 yards rushing and nine touchdowns, Chris Ivory, T.J. Yeldon, Corey Grant and Bortles combined for 1,205 yards and seven touchdowns.

"Minimizing their run is more than just focusing on Leonard," Jaguars coach Mike Tomlin said Tuesday. "Obviously, we have to do a good job there, but we have to do a good job for 60 minutes and in all areas. We want to minimize the ways that they run the ball and the ways that they possess the ball and control the game."

The Jaguars finished with 231 yards rushing in the first meeting, the most allowed by the Steelers this season.

While Fournette's late burst skewed the numbers a bit, it was a run made possible by the 36 attempts that came before it as Jacksonville simply wore Pittsburgh down until the Steelers yielded.

More of the same is likely this weekend. The Jaguars are hardly apologetic for their approach, one that emphasizes controlling the clock and the tempo.

It's a formula that helped them reach the playoffs for the first time in a decade and one they used effectively — if not exactly glamorously — while outlasting

AFC DIVISIONAL PLAYOFFS

Jacksonville Jaguars at Pittsburgh Steelers



(Regular-season statistics)



JAGUARS (10-6)

Team leaders

(Yards)

Blake Bortles	3,687	PASSING	Ben Roethlisberger	4,251
Leonard Fournette	1,040	RUSHING	Le'Veon Bell	1,291
Keelan Cole	748	RECEIVING	Antonio Brown	1,533

Team comparison

Average per game



OFFENSE

DEFENSE

26.1

POINTS

16.8

25.4

19.2

365.9

TOTAL YDS

286.1

377.9

306.9

224.6

PASSING

169.9

273.8

201.1

141.4

RUSHING

116.2

104.2

105.8

SOURCE: National Football League

AP

Buffalo in the wild-card round.

Bortles included. For all of his occasional issues throwing the ball, Bortles can make up for it with his legs.

He ran for more yards (88) than he passed for (87) against the Bills. He had four runs of 10 yards or more. He had only five passes that traveled that distance.

"People talk about his skill-set or whatever," Steelers safety Mike Mitchell said. "At the end of the day they won the game. It's dangerous, we respect it. Our job is to be able to cover."

And tackle. And not get so caught up in trying to get to Bortles that they let him squirt loose,

a bad habit Pittsburgh picked up at times this season even as it led the NFL and set a franchise record with 55 sacks, one more than the Jaguars.

"You've got to be controlled," Dupree said. You've got to stay in your rush lane. You don't want him to hurt you with his feet. It might be third-and-12, he might get 10 yards. You don't want that to happen. You've got to make sure you're constricting the rush lane, pushing the pocket. Just get him to step up in the pocket, we can chase him down then."

And, the Steelers hope, run all the way to the AFC title game in the process.

Saints say they've evolved since playing Vikings

BY BRETT MARTEL
Associated Press

METAIRIE, La. — For Saints coach Sean Payton and his players, it's a bit of a stretch to call their return to Minnesota a rematch.

Sixteen games have passed since Week 1, when the Saints needed a late, inconsequential touchdown just to reduce the Vikings' victory margin to 10 points.

New Orleans has lost numerous players to injuries. Other players have grown into more significant roles. Chemistry developed, and coaches became more adept at coping up with weaknesses of various players. The result has been an NFC South championship and a victory in the wild-card round of the NFL playoffs.

"There are some similarities in regards to scheme. But when you go through the course of an NFL season and you look at the attrition that takes place, there's — shoot — eight or nine of our [regulars] that were playing in that game that aren't playing in this game," Payton said Monday. "You begin to take shape as the season progresses as to who you become."

Seven players listed as start-

NFC DIVISIONAL PLAYOFFS

New Orleans Saints at Minnesota Vikings



(Regular-season statistics)



SAINTS (11-5)

Team leaders

(Yards)

VIKINGS (13-3)

Drew Brees	4,334	PASSING	Case Keenum	3,547
Mark Ingram	1,124	RUSHING	Latavius Murray	842
Michael Thomas	1,245	RECEIVING	Adam Thielen	1,276

Team comparison

Average per game



OFFENSE

DEFENSE

28.0

POINTS

20.4

23.9

15.8

391.2

TOTAL YDS

336.5

356.9

275.9

261.8

PASSING

224.8

234.6

192.4

129.4

RUSHING

111.7

122.3

83.6

SOURCE: National Football League

AP

ers in Minnesota in Week 1 won't be playing for New Orleans this weekend. Running back Adrian Peterson was traded after four games. Six others are injured: left guard Andrus Peat; right tackle

Zach Strief; defensive end Alex Okafor; linebackers A.J. Klein and Alex Anzalone; and safety Kenny Vaccaro.

In addition, tight end Coby Fleener is on injured reserve.

Payton complimented the way linebackers Craig Robertson and Manti Te'o have handled increased roles. Robertson has two sacks, two interceptions, five tackles for losses, a forced fumble and fumble recovery. Te'o has made or assisted on 62 tackles, including seven for losses, and has a fumble recovery.

Payton also named tight end Josh Hill, guard Senio Kelemete, cornerback P.J. Williams and fullback Zach Line in a similar vein. Hill had a touchdown and key first-down catches in New Orleans' playoff triumph over Carolina. Kelemete, pressed into service often this season because of injuries.

Line, who scored a short TD against Carolina, wasn't on the regular-season roster until Oct. 4. The contributions from such players have been "the most encouraging thing," Payton said, adding that "the resiliency and the fight" of his team "is something that's great to be around."

New Orleans' defense, in particular, has played much better since the Minnesota loss, when the Saints gave up 470 yards and allowed the Vikings to convert

nine of 14 third downs.

"We've been playing together for a while now, so we kind of know the strengths and the weaknesses of the guys. We know how to play together, we know where people are going to be and so we're a lot more confident," Te'o said. "Week 1, we were a relatively young team as far as experience goes and as far as time together."

Now, Te'o said, "We kind of know who are and what we can do and what our strengths are ... and also what things we need to work on."

Offensively, the Saints have evolved as well, particularly with the emergence of versatile running back Alvin Kamara, who put up regular-season numbers (728 yards and eight TDs rushing, 826 yards and five TDs receiving) and a kickoff return TD worthy of rookie-of-the-year consideration. Meanwhile, receiver Ted Ginn, known primarily as a deep threat before the Saints acquired him in the offseason, demonstrated enough chemistry with quarterback Drew Brees as the season progressed to convert key first downs on intermediate routes as well.

NFL PLAYOFFS



KEITH SRANOGIC/AP

Pittsburgh Steelers running back Le'Veon Bell is fresh heading into Sunday's playoff game against Jacksonville, claiming skipping training camp helped keep him healthy.

Carrying a heavy load

Bell ready to shoulder biggest burden for Steelers

By WILL GRAVES
Associated Press

This was always part of Le'Veon Bell's business plan, the one that the Pittsburgh Steelers running back put together over the summer when he decided to skip training camp while waiting to sign his franchise tag tender.

Bell's eyes weren't focused on August but January. No camp meant less wear and tear on the legs that are pivotal to his team's Super Bowl hopes.

Even after a season in which his 406 touches were 60 more than any other player in the league, Bell insists he's "100" as the kids say heading into Sunday's divisional round game against Jacksonville.

"I feel great, especially not playing these last two weeks, not going to camp earlier in the year," Bell said Wednesday. "I can't complain. I like where I am. This is the freshest I've ever been going into the playoffs so we'll see how it goes."

Bell missed the 2014 and 2015 playoffs with knee injuries and after practically carrying the Pittsburgh offense through the second

half of the season in 2016, the groin problem he spent weeks trying to ignore flared up early in the AFC championship game.

He managed just 20 yards on six carries before leaving in the second quarter of a 36-17 loss to New England and spent the rest of the game watching from the sideline, helpless amid the blowing snow.

A year later, the memory lingers. Bell knows Pittsburgh's best chance to finally unseat the Patriots is with his No. 26 featured prominently.

It's one of the main reasons why he waited until Sept. 4 to sign the franchise tender that made him the highest-paid running back in the league, a decision that briefly alienated the fan base, but one his teammates understood completely.

He finished third in the league in yards rushing (1,291) and 10th in receptions (85) despite sitting out the regular-season finale with a first-round bye already clinched.

Yet Bell is at the point in his career where what happens from September through December is no longer the point.

On a team loaded with talent, he's well aware the one thing he's missing on his resu-

mé is the one thing that a massive payday and all the regular-season touches in the world can't buy.

"I honestly don't care about records or things like that," Bell said. "I just want to win a championship. I think everything else kind of comes with it."

And Bell isn't afraid to speak his mind to make sure Pittsburgh's season ends in Minneapolis next month. He didn't hesitate to question his relatively light workload during a 30-9 loss to Jacksonville on Oct. 8. He carried just 15 times for 47 yards against a team that came into the game ranked last in the NFL against the rush.

"We didn't necessarily stick to our game plan, we had to start playing catch-up a little bit so we couldn't really run the ball as much as we wanted to," Bell said. "We'll see how the game goes. We want to be balanced."

For the Steelers that often means making sure Bell is a vital part of the process. Pittsburgh is 6-0 this season when Bell has 30 touches or more.

It sounds like a lot because it is a lot. Yet Bell also hasn't crossed it since a win over Green Bay the weekend after Thanksgiving.

By the numbers

406

Number of touches Steelers running back Le'Veon Bell had this season, 60 more than any other player.

15

Number of carries Bell had during the Steelers' 30-9 loss to Jacksonville when the teams met on Oct. 8.

6-0

The Steelers' record when Bell has 30 touches or more in a game. Bell hasn't had 30 touches since a win over the Packers the week after Thanksgiving.

SOURCE: Associated Press

NFL PLAYOFFS



NFC divisional playoff
Atlanta Falcons (11-6)
at Philadelphia Eagles (13-3)
AFN-Sports
10:30 p.m. Saturday CET
6:30 a.m. Sunday JKT



AFC divisional playoff
Tennessee Titans (10-7)
at New England Patriots (13-3)
AFN-Sports
2 a.m. Sunday CET
10 a.m. Sunday JKT



AFC divisional playoff
Jacksonville Jaguars (11-6)
at Pittsburgh Steelers (13-3)
AFN-Sports
7 p.m. Sunday CET
3 a.m. Monday JKT



NFC divisional playoff
New Orleans Saints (12-5)
at Minnesota Vikings (13-3)
AFN-Sports
10:30 p.m. Sunday CET
6:30 a.m. Monday JKT



KEVIN KUB/AP

Falcons quarterback Matt Ryan, pictured, with nine playoff starts, will lead Atlanta against host Philadelphia and Nick Foles on Saturday in what will be the Eagles' quarterback's second postseason start.



BUTCH DILL/AP

Saints quarterback Drew Brees passes against the Carolina Panthers in New Orleans during last Sunday's wild-card playoff win. Brees, with a dozen postseason starts under his belt, will have a decided experience advantage over Vikings quarterback Case Keenum — making his playoff debut — when the Saints visit Minnesota on Sunday.

Experience meets youth

Huge disparity in QB postseason starts in weekend matchups

By SAM FARMER
Los Angeles Times

NEW ORLEANS — Drew Brees has a dozen playoff starts.

That's not lost on his New Orleans Saints teammates, even those who are making their first foray into the NFL postseason. They understand the value of experience in these do-or-die games.

"It's huge to have a guy like Drew Brees at the helm, who understands every situation," defensive tackle Sheldon Rankins said after Sunday's first-round victory over Carolina. "He's never going to put our defense in a bad position. He's never going to put this team in a bad position. He's always going to give us a chance to win. That's all you can ask for."

A big theme heading into the four divisional games is the wealth of experience at quarterback versus the lack thereof. In every game, there's a seasoned passer on one side and a relative newcomer on the other.

Brees versus Minnesota's Case Keenum, making his posaeon debut.

New England's Tom Brady (34 playoff games) vs. Tennessee's Marcus Mariota (one).

Pittsburgh's Ben Roethlisberger (20) vs. Jacksonville's Blake Bortles (one).

Atlanta's Matt Ryan (nine) vs. Philadelphia's Nick Foles (one).

Experience counts, something that was evident in the Falcons' first-round victory over the Los Angeles Rams. That game pitted a team that was fresh off a Super Bowl — albeit a historic second-half collapse — against one that had not played in the postseason since 2004. Rams quarterback Jared Goff was not at the top of his game.

"It's super fast. Everyone's into it," Jacksonville linebacker Dante Fowler Jr. noted



MATT ROURKE/AP

Eagles quarterback Nick Foles had his lone playoff start in 2013, when he led Philadelphia in a 26-24 loss to the New Orleans Saints at Lincoln Financial Field. Foles threw for 195 yards, and two touchdowns, with a passer rating of 105.0 in his postseason debut.

of the playoff intensity. "It's just a different tempo, very fast."

The Jaguars are looking to shock the football world a second time, after a 30-9 victory at Pittsburgh in October when they ran back two Roethlisberger interceptions for touchdowns. It was after that game that the two-time Super Bowl-winning quarterback famously said "Maybe I don't have it anymore" in frustration.

Bortles was not a big factor in that game, passing for just 95 yards with an interception. It was rookie running back Leonard Fournette who set the pace with 181 yards and two touchdowns.

The Steelers will have All-Pro receiver Antonio Brown back from a calf injury he sustained in mid-December.

"We'll see how it goes and how the week progressed," Brown, the NFL's only unanimous All-Pro, told reporters Monday. "I feel I was able to go through practice. I can still get a little better, but it was good to be

Old hands

There's no comparison when it comes to experience with regards to this weekend's playoff QB matchups.

Player	games	Att.-Comp.	Yards	TDs
Brady, 34	831	1325	9094	63
Roethlisberger, 20	385	618	4787	25
Brees, 12	329	497	3915	26
Ryan, 9	215	315	2462	19

Source: pro-football-reference.com

out there. There's still a lot to test. First day of the week."

The Patriots have the AFC's top seed and a five-time Super Bowl winner in Brady, although they've been dealing with the potential distraction of an ESPN report of a strained relationship among the quarterback, coach Bill Belichick and owner Robert Kraft.

Then again, the Patriots have weathered turbulence before and still won.

The Titans played at New England during the 2015 season and lost, 33-16. In that game, the rookie Mariota left in the second quarter after consecutive drives that ended in sacks.

Belichick said Monday that there's no value in his players studying that game tape, with the teams and situations so different now. He also warned against dismissing the Titans as being light on postseason experience.

"I don't think what happened two years ago really has any bearing at all, whatsoever, on this game," Belichick said.

As for the Eagles, they already made history. A far less dangerous team without quarterback Carson Wentz, they are the first No. 1 seed to be an underdog in a divisional game. Las Vegas opened with the Falcons favored by three.

Asked what he'd like to see out of Foles, Eagles offensive coordinator Frank Reich said he simply wants him to "play his game."

"This is a team game," Reich said. "This is we, we, we. We're going to do this. We do it together. It's not any one man."

SPORTS



'Pain in the butt'
Managing players' minutes is no fun for coaches » **NBA, Page 55**

YOUTH VS. EXPERIENCE

*POSTSEASON MATCHUPS
PIT AGELESS WONDERS
AGAINST UPSTART QBs*



**TWO
DAYS OF
PLAYOFF
THRILLS**

MARCUS

MARIOTA VS.

TOM

BRADY

TENNESSEE TITANS

NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS



**CASE
KEENUM**
MINNESOTA VIKINGS

VS.

**DREW
BREES**
NEW ORLEANS SAINTS



**BLAKE
BORTLES**
JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS

VS.

**BEN
ROETHLISBERGER**
PITTSBURGH STEELERS



Weekend NFL playoff preview: Page 63

PLUS: Matt Ryan's ATLANTA FALCONS vs. Nick Foles' PHILADELPHIA EAGLES

Shiffrin chasing goal of five Olympic golds » Page 58

